

# ANTILLEN REVIEW

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**Economic outlook  
for the eighties**

**Shell's No. 1 man  
moderately  
optimistic**

**Social pragmatism**

**The nation goes  
on vacation**

**Curaçao cabinet-  
makers rediscovered**

**Journalism training  
to get international  
dimension**

**Some joke**



foto Hart's Camera

**A golden opportunity**



# El a yega!

*"E Kampeon":*  
Coca-Cola na

# LITER



Bon pa 6glas i... más



Coca-Cola  
mi ke!





## FROM THE EDITOR

Few governments nowadays are spared scandals. If not the opposition then investigative reporting will bring to light embarrassing facts. The winner is always democracy, the loser usually the government. Having won the elections on the appealing slogan "clean government" prime-minister Don Martina exposed himself and his cabinet implicitly to the scrutiny of parliament and press. With a view to the recent political past it must be counted a compliment that for the two years he and his team have been in office, there was not even the slightest rumor of corruption. When last month a scandal was uncovered (see page 5), the government both won and lost.

The integrity of the cabinet was doubted by no-one: a resounding victory for Martina's honest approach to politics. The only one unaware of this feat, however, was the government itself. The endless and boring defence it put up during numerous TV- and radio broadcasts did nothing more than foster the already existing impression of political naivité. Add to this the growing concern about the indecisiveness of at least some of the cabinet members — there seems to be no end to analysing — and it is clear

why the government's image did suffer after all. But such is the goodwill still enjoyed by the Martina cabinet that a strong comeback is very well possible. The decision to invite some outstanding financial experts to advise the government with regard to the endangered off-shore position of the country may be a hopeful indication.

In this respect it should be noted that negotiations with the USA will need the help of more than financial expertise. It is not unconceivable that the Americans are willing to pay a price for the assurance of political stability in this part of the Caribbean. Here at least is an opportunity for the government to win back some of the points it lost during the past weeks.

\* \* \*

A special word of thanks should go to mr. J. van der Walle, who sent AR some photographs of the beautiful collection of Curaçao furniture he possesses and which will eventually go to the Rijks Museum in Amsterdam. Mr. van der Walle also contributed to the text readers will find together with the pictures on pages 24 and 25.

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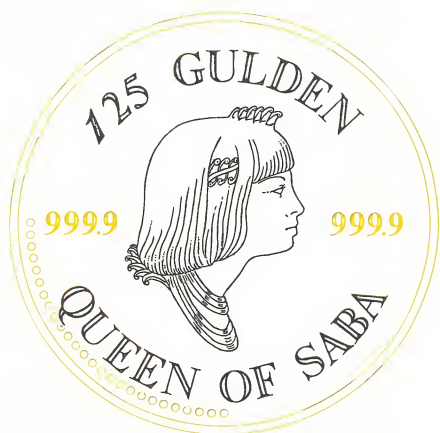
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## A golden opportunity

### AN ANALYSIS OF THE QUEEN OF SABA AFFAIR

The issuance of the "Queen of Saba", a gold coin as legal tender, looked like good business at least to the government of the Netherlands Antilles. But unprofessional handling of the preparatory proceedings caused a nation wide uproar. Worst of all the ensuing debate threatened to undermine the credibility of the Central Bank. It also distracted attention from the basic question: should the government go in for speculation?

#### Ofir

In March 1980 Ofir-Curaçao N.V. was incorporated with a capital stock of US\$ 500,000.— and with the purpose to issue gold coins on the world market.

In order to compete with the Kruggerand (South Africa) and the Maple Leaf (Canada) it was considered necessary to obtain the status of legal tender for a gold coin which Ofir was to issue under the name "Queen of Saba", named after the smallest island of the Netherlands Antilles. Ofir submitted therefore a feasibility study to the Bank of the Netherlands Antilles (the Central Bank) and started negotiations with representatives of the Government and the Central Bank to realize the project. A strong bargaining point for Ofir was the fact that it had acquired the rights for a special process, the "Sola-process", which would enable it to manufacture coins of 24 carat 999.9 fine gold of unusual hardness.

Worldwide profits were estimated by Ofir at \$ 800,000.— in 1981 to \$ 10,000,000.— in 1984 and up to \$ 16,000,000.— in 1987.

Ofir alleged that an agreement had been reached with Merrill Lynch Pierce Fenner & Smith Inc., the world's largest broker, to introduce the Queen of Saba on the world market. The coins would be manufactured either by York Mint Ltd. (Birmingham) or Sheffield Smelting Cy. Ltd. (Sheffield) of gold supplied by Engelhard Industries Ltd. and Westway Metals Corporation.

#### Government

The Government was impressed and on June 20, 1980 the Central Bank issued a letter of intent in which it declared that with approval of the Minister of Finance it had been decided that the Netherlands Antilles would issue a gold coin with the name Queen of

Saba and that the coin would be legal tender in this country. The coin should be of such quality that the Government would be able to guarantee the pureness thereof.

Furthermore the letter of intent stated: "Ofir Curaçao N.V. has the sales and distribution rights for the whole world. Ofir Curaçao N.V. may use this letter of intent to approach potential participants in this scheme . . . . It is the intention that the project will be officially ratified by Government decree before the end of 1980".

Negotiations between the Government and Ofir would still take nine months, well into 1981.

#### Basic Agreement

The agreement reached eventually between the Government and Ofir, and which was to be signed in the first week of April 1981, contained the following provisions: ▶



1. The Queen of Saba would be issued in weights of 1, 1/2 and 1/4 troy ounce of gold with a nominal value of NAfl. 500.—, NAfl. 250.— and NAfl. 125.— respectively.
2. Ofir obtained the exclusive rights for the manufacturing and distribution of the coins.
3. Ofir, for its own account and risk, would provide the gold necessary for the manufacturing of the coins. Contracts with third parties would have to be approved by the Government.
4. Ofir represents and guarantees the manufacturing of the coins in 24 crts. 999.9 of gold in accordance with the Sola-process which would be used exclusively for the manufacturing of the Queen of Saba.
5. The Government and Ofir jointly would fix the number of coins to be produced.
6. Ofir guarantees a production capacity of at least 300.000 troy ounce gold in the first year, 600.000 troy ounce in the 2nd year and at least 1.200.000 troy ounce in the 3rd year and thereafter.
7. Ofir would have the right to negotiate a commission from distributors and sellers of the coin, which commission — at a minimum — would also be due if the Government would buy from Ofir.
8. The Government would receive a royalty from Ofir — to be paid in US dollars — equal to 1% of the gold value, in accordance with the London fix at the closest date, of the coins delivered by Ofir.

Furthermore it was agreed that the Central Bank would participate for 20% in the capital stock of Ofir Curaçao N.V.

### Parliament

In anticipation of the final agreement the Central Bank on February 20th, 1981 bought and received hundred shares in Ofir Curaçao N.V. of which the par value was \$ 100,000.—. The purchase price was \$ 1.5 million.



G. de Paula: questions

On the 2nd of April 1981 a member of the Netherlands Antilles' legislative council (Staten), Mr. G. de Paula, fired sharp questions at the Minister of Finance, Mr. Marco de Castro, an economist. Obviously embarrassed, Mr. De Castro and his colleagues who had approved the participation by the Central Bank, rushed to undo the transaction.

In the ensuing public uproar and political skirmishes it became apparent that the minister and a high official of the Central Bank, had not paid sufficient attention to the matter of the Queen of Saba and that they had not heeded early warning from other officers at the bank: the participation by the Central Bank was against its charter, instituted by law. The amount paid for the shares was far beyond anything that could be considered a reasonable agio.

The parliament convened and a motion disapproving of the conduct of the minister of finance was tabled pending a hearing by the parliament into the "Queen of Saba affair".

While the whole matter could have been dealt with business-like, a local newspaper took the opportunity to vent accusations at the officers of the Central Bank, for an assortment of wrongdoings.

The Government, eager to distract attention from its own shortcomings, demanded the resignation of the board of supervisory direc-

tors of the Central Bank and suspended the secretary of the Bank. The accusations made in parliament, in newspapers and by the prime-minister on television, did not help to throw light on what happened nor to explain the mistakes.

It was indeed hard to understand why the Government after the annulment of the transaction with Ofir, wanted to continue the Queen of Saba business with Ofir.

### Reputation

The mistakes committed by the Government, trusting blindly on erroneous information supplied by Ofir and by an unexperienced representative of the Central Bank, will be forgotten: a blemish in the careers of a civil servant and some politicians.

It hurts, however, to see how a venerable institute as the Bank of the Netherlands Antilles was involved in petty politics.

The Bank, which four years ago celebrated its 150th anniversary, has built over the years a solid reputation which boosted the image of the Netherlands Antilles in international financial circles. Its officers could rightly command respect from commercial banks and business people for their knowledge and integrity.

Past governments have tried in vain to mold the officers of the Bank to conform to political wishes of the moment. To withstand such pressures one needs personalities with insight and experience.

It was a tragic mistake to appoint an unexperienced secretary at the bank. It shows lack of vision that the continuity in top-positions at the bank is insufficiently guaranteed.

But the worst part is that it was considered necessary to expose the shortcomings at the Central Bank in an atmosphere of scandal, way out of proportion. The Central Bank is still a solid institute and there are still very capable officers and supervisory directors doing their job. ▶



The Bank will of course overcome its present headaches if the case is properly handled without drastic shake-ups or politically motivated appointments. The board of supervisory directors should be the one to guarantee continuity in management, and not a government or minister whose continuity of management depends on the whims of the electoral vote.

### Speculation

The main question which remains is, whether the Government should continue the Queen of Saba-project and if the Government should participate in the capital stock of Ofir Curaçao N.V. as announced by the minister of finance.

The minister has defended the project and the participation by the Government on the basis that the Netherlands Antilles would receive foreign currency by the issuance of the Queen of Saba. In these times foreign currency is indeed worth gold!

The contention is basically that the Government without any risk would receive its royalties in dollars from Ofir, while Ofir would

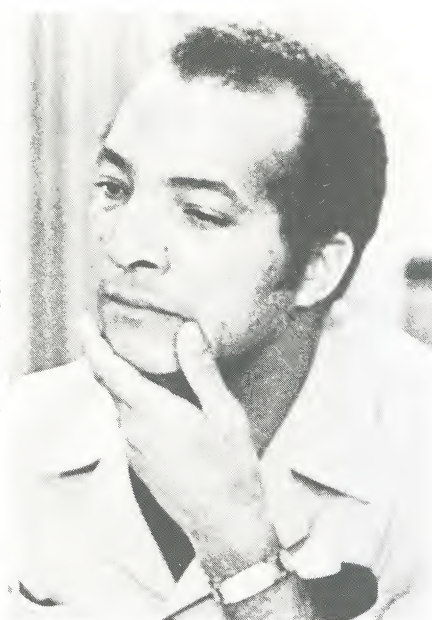


Photo F. Sulbaran

Minister of finance: M. de Castro

carry the capital investments and risks and do the job.

This is of course a strong argument. The Government (Central Bank!) has benefited in the past from gold coins which were issued in limited amounts as legal tender.

To prevent all possible hazards, the minister of finance has said

that the face value of a coin of one troy ounce gold could be set at NAfl. 100.— and furthermore that the Government would control the quantity of coins issued regularly. Finally the Central Bank would be safeguarded by a provision that if the gold-value would drop below the par value of a coin, the Queen of Saba would lose its status of legal tender.

It sounds like a confidence trick: a con-game. One could say: the coin is a legal tender as long as it does not cost the Central Bank money and the Government will promote the issuance of the coin as long as it can profit from speculation in gold.

The scheme sounds a bit frivolous for a Central Bank and a Government whose main asset should be its TRUSTWORTHINESS and its CREDIBILITY.

Does it really need explanation?

It is as if the Government levies a tax on a casino operation! With the difference however that the Government participates in the House (the Casino) while guaranteeing payment to the gamblers as long as the house wins! Good business! Poor credibility. ■

EZ

### COINS ISSUED BY THE CENTRAL BANK



- 1973: Silver coin, face value Naf. 25.—. Total amount issued 60.395 of which 40.188 regular. Value today Naf. 150.— (approx.)
- 1976: Gold coin, face value Naf. 200.—. Total amount issued 21.168 of which 5726 regular. Value today Naf. 500.— (approx.)

- 1976: Silver coin, face value Naf. 25.—. Total amount issued 22.411 of which 200 regular. Value today Naf. 450.—.
- 1977: Gold coin, face value Naf. 200.—. Total amount issued 8.532 of which 1000 regular and the others 'proof'. Value of regulars Naf. 625.— (approx.)
- 1977: Silver coin, face value Naf. 25.—. Total amount issued 2000. Complete issue sold to government.
- 1978: Gold coin, face value Naf. 100.—. Total amount issued 50.000 of which 26.500 regular. Value today Naf. 260.— (approx.)
- 1978: Silver coin, face value Naf. 10.—. Total amount issued 50.000 of which 35.325 regular. Value today Naf. 80.— (approx.)
- 1979: Silver coin, face value Naf. 25.—. Total amount issued 52.500 of which 50.000 regular. Value today Naf. 240.— (approx.)
- 1979: Gold coin, face value Naf. 50.—. Total amount issued 75.000 of which 11.000 regular. Value today Naf. 180.— (approx.)
- 1980: Gold coin, face value Naf. 300.—. Total amount issued 50.000 of which 10.000 regular. Others are 'proof'. Value of regulars today Naf. 400.— (approx.)





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*Royal Dutch Navy:* New constructions and renovations on Marinebase Parera and Military Home with swimming pool, etc.

*Hotels:* Reconstruction of Curaçao Plaza Hotel  
Avila Beach Hotel  
Coral Cliff Hotel and  
Princess Beach Hotel

*Office Buildings:* In "Villapark Rooi Catootje" several 1-, 2- and 3 storey office-buildings

*Houses:* Luxury townhouses in "Villapark Rooi Catootje" and elsewhere

*Warehouses and many other big and small jobs.*

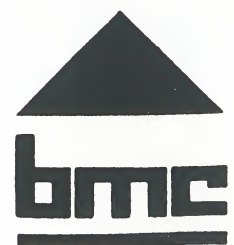


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# Diving for a future

*"Our investigations indicate that strong opportunities exist in the development of the diving market. Further, early response can be anticipated from promotional efforts, since Bonaire has an already established reputation in this market segment. An investment in more marketing activity on a sustained basis could double the current volume of visiting divers by 1983".*

Thus reads a promotion study for the course of tourism planning for Bonaire, recently completed by Pannell Kerr Forster, a leading international firm of management consultants from London, England. The extensive report, which was financed by the European Economic Commission, covers the present state of the tourist industry and gives detailed recommendations for its promotion.

### Diving

The overall objective for tourism development of Bonaire, according to the report, should be consistent with the island's environmental assets, human resources and life style. Such an objective obviously precludes the promotion of the noisier pleasure-seeking kind of tourism, which has seduced and consequently abused so many of the Caribbean islands with its promise of quick and large returns. Many who feared that Bonaire might well head for the same direction, may now feel relieved. The report puts strong emphasis on Bonaire's unique asset: the beautiful coral reefs fringing its coast. Increasing numbers of divers have already descended on the island during the past years. Many came back for return visits.

The study recommends to direct all efforts towards promoting this sport.

A stronger emphasis should be placed on attracting "individual" rather than "group" orientated divers, thus raising the level of expenditure on the island in real terms.

### Markets

The USA is mentioned as the principal market source. A potential audience of at least one million, which in marketing terms can be effectively penetrated, is available. Marketing efforts should concentrate on Texas, California, Florida and the Mid-West.

Europe, especially Holland and Germany, could provide an important useful secondary source, particularly during the summer season. Of the Latin American markets, the report states, Venezuela is the most important. Because of its market profile, however, it should be treated cautiously, as it is unlikely to provide at this stage of market development the consistent revenue producing capability of the USA and Europe. Argentina, too, has potential, but again further expansion is only likely to displace more consistent market sources as occupancy levels on Bonaire rise.

The local Antillean market is very significant and should be utilised as a very short-term filler as occupancy troughs appear in off-peak periods.

### Accommodation

Although the occupancy rates for 1979 and 1980 were only 42.9 and 48.0%, the report states that Bonaire's 615 beds will not suffice

once a real effort is undertaken to develop the diver's and resort-orientated tourist market. It follows therefore that for tourism expansion to become a reality investment is required in additional tourist accommodation and ancillary facilities. It is assumed that by 1983 the total of available beds will have risen to 1.015.

### Aggressive

The recommended promotional plan, which has a duration of three years, puts a heavy accent on aggressive sales capability. It mildly criticizes the efforts of the New York and Caracas Tourist offices, which have concentrated mostly on press and public relations activities. Personal relationships with the travel trade should be maintained on a more regular basis. The report points out that the most effective tourist marketing methodology is one which embraces actively selling the product on a person to person basis.

Strengthening of the marketing and sales personnel capacity in the tourist offices in Bonaire, New York and Caracas is therefore envisaged.

### Cost

The summary of the budget requirements for the period 1981-1983 shows a total figure of US\$ 1,150,000.—. The writers of the report estimate an overall expenditure of US\$ 39.1 per additional visitor rising to US\$ 75.2, if the view is taken that market demand would grow by 10% per annum without any additional stimulation. Based upon this assumption, incremental revenue to the island over and above that achieved by a 10% per annum growth is estimated at approx. US\$ 4.8 million, implying a marketing cost ratio of 24%. Not an unreasonable level of expenditure. It should be noted that destinations, like the Bahamas and Jamaica are spending at that level or higher on a continuous basis. ■



# Economic outlook for the eighties

## Aruba's chances

by H. Timmer



*"I know no way of judging the future  
but by the past"*

*Patrick Henry.*

If anybody in 1971 would have dared to predict that in ten years' time US interest rates would be 20% and that a barrel of oil would cost around \$ 35.—, he would have been ridiculed as utterly incompetent and overly pessimistic. Now that we have moved into the 80's and wonder about what lies ahead, we will have to take stock of those turbulent 70's, which brought upon us such a measure of inflation and recession.

For a small island like Aruba it is imperative to analyze carefully the past and present of the countries around us in order to determine our chances for the future. For perhaps no economy is more dependent on others than ours.

### Stagnation

Most of the present day inflation is caused by the worldwide trend of overspending by governments. The introduction of the welfare-system has inevitably resulted in an increase of the role of the state. Based on noble social programs the system can only be executed by means of ever higher taxes, which, however, stifle incentives of entrepreneurs resulting in slower economic growth, lower tax income and a growing deficit on the government budget.

This pattern leads to a crisis, because while the tax income becomes less, the social programs remain as costly as before. In fact as unemployment rises and welfare payments increase, these programs take up even more of the government budget.

All government planning is based on the expectation of continued economic growth. The increases needed to pay for the above mentioned programs depend on such a growth. During the 50's and 60's this was indeed the case but not so during the 70's.

### Reasons

What is commonly called the oil crisis caused a steep rise in the production costs and the cost of living. This led to a situation in which industry could only produce at higher prices, while at the same time the sales stagnated because of diminished purchasing power. This combination of stagnation and inflation is now called: stagflation.

During the past decade there was also a growing awareness of environmental pollution. The measures to counteract this situation increased production costs without yielding any compensating income. Although the benefits in terms of a healthier environment must be labelled important, these measures had a distinct inflationary effect.

Demand for a number of products declined in many countries because of less purchasing power and a slow-down in population growth.

The incentive to expand or spend large sums on research and the development of new products diminished due to the combination of higher taxes and lower profits. Investors have lost faith in the future and are concentrating on low risk short term projects. In the USA the lagging of investments has slowed down productivity growth. As a result many industries are no longer in a competitive position on the international market. Which in turn means that jobs are lost to imports from countries such as Japan, where the entire nation, including government and labour, is committed to long term industrial expansion. A cooperation which is sorely lacking in many of the developed countries.

### The USA

It took several years to reach widespread understanding of the drastic changes that took place during the 70's. Most countries agree on the scope and

nature of the problem but come up with different solutions.

The USA under Reagan has now started a program aimed at reviving the private sector. The program has the same objectives as those introduced by most West European countries, with one important difference. Besides reducing government spending and introducing incentives for business, as most countries do, the USA combines these measures with drastic reductions in taxes. This move has been suggested by an influential group of economists called: supply-siders. They claim that high taxes and big government destroy wealth and perpetuate poverty. Tax rates of 50-70% deaden incentives to work, save and invest in risky but productive industries. The result is more unemployment, more poverty, more government payouts to support the poor and unemployed and again higher taxes, a never ending spiral.

In the opinion of the supply-side economists, the poor will fare best in a vibrant economy in which low tax rates spur investments and stimulate the creation of jobs. Rather than taxing away the money first and then pumping it into the economy, they prefer to leave the money with the investor and enterprise and believe that this will create the healthy climate needed to accelerate long range expansion of industry.

The supply of goods will be increased, demand will follow and more jobs will be available. Competition will keep prices down and, as a result, inflation will be lower. Fears that this may imply the end of the more humane society introduced by Roosevelt are waved aside: welfare payments will be there for the most needy, but less people will depend on them as more will have jobs.

### Japan

Not all countries, however, find themselves in a position of having to pull the ▶



reigns. The most amazing success story of the seventies — to be prolonged into the 80's — is of course Japan. A country without any natural resources except its people, very similar to our islands — a country that has to import all its energy and as we do, pay the ever increasing OPEC-prices for it — and still a country that took the lead in many industrial fields during the 70's. The Japanese are workaholics — and consider this a compliment — but that is not the only answer.

There is more, a combination of factors, in general an optimal cooperation between Government, industry and labour and one national goal: the future of the country and all its people. The Japanese resist a 5-day work week because they fear that taking that much leisure every week may have a negative effect on the competitive position of Japanese exports and as such may increase unemployment (now 1%) or reduce income.

Japan works on the consensus that everybody in the country is to support the long term view of planned industrial expansion. There is a unity of the people, an eagerness to learn or follow special training courses, an acceptance of change and a loyalty to the employer unmatched in other countries. Add to this a minimum of bureaucracy and a maximum of efficiency both in government and industry, and it can easily be understood why we see such an abundance of Japanese products on the world market.

## Aruba

The foregoing remarks may help us to learn from the mistakes made during the seventies and — looking at Japan — encourage us to build a sound economy even if we too lack all natural resources.

What matters is that we make creative use of the natural circumstances and the potential of our people in creating services that will find a willing market abroad.

We are not an underdeveloped country in the sense that we still have to learn how to satisfy the basic needs of our people. We have the education, medical services and economic activities that most developed nations have. And although we are handicapped in that we have to import both our food and energy — and even have to use costly oil to produce water — the past 50 years have been proof that there is a market for our services, if we are willing to work and make creative use of the few opportunities presented.

## Diversification

To safeguard ourselves against recessions that may occur in different sectors of the economy, we will have to look for diversification in our industrial planning. It should be realised, however, that the post-industrial age, which will take definite form during the 80's, will leave few opportunities for a small island such as Aruba. With almost total automation most types of industry will offer less and less employment. In the 90's, computer-aided manufacturing systems will do away with the assembly line worker.

This process of automation has already been on its way for many years: Philips recently informed its shareholders that it now takes only one quarter of the labour cost to make a color TV-set, as compared to 12 years ago. As wages all but doubled during that period this means that one person is now making the same number of sets that 10 persons would have made in 1968. Of course he is not making anything, he is just

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guiding the automated machinery. The same tendency is apparent in other sectors and will be universal by the end of the 80's.

The implication is that we will have to look for labour-intensive industries like fashion and the production of certain sport items. But we should be aware that it will not be easy to attract such industries to our island.

## Export-oriented

AR reported in its last issue on the commendable efforts of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, using the know-how of Ireland's Export Board to attract me ▶

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dium-sized and export-orientated industries by offering free-zone facilities, an attractive package of incentives and an efficient, no red-tape approach.

No doubt these efforts, if successful, will contribute in some measure to strengthening our economy and alleviating the unemployment problem. But we should never forget that such industries will not be permanent pillars of our economy. Competition in these off-shore production-units will be tough and worldwide. Some will be here for many years, others will have to leave soon. Technological progress, just to name one factor, will be so fast and revolutionary, that one can never predict the number of years a certain production-unit can keep abreast of the competition. Such will be life in the industrial world of the 80's.

**Oil**

Here we can be brief. Lago will remain important and valuable as a large contributor to our tax income, but the number of people involved will not be growing much. Refineries and bulk stations are also getting more and more automated. Whether the waters around our island will some day yield oil is still an open question. One thing is at least certain: even if we strike oil it will not create much employment opportunities.

**Tourism**

Tourism and all the related industrial and service aspects will no doubt remain the main pillar of our economy. In fact here lies a great challenge for Aruba, difficult and complicated, but with great employment opportunities and the best chances for continuity.

The impact of automation will be far less than in other types of industry. Tiring and boring chores will be taken over by machines. There will be disposable linen. Cashiers will have it easier as guests will be able to get their bank accounts at home debited immediately for the beer they drink in Aruba as hotels get hooked up to satellites. The computer will take over part of the controls on stocks and administration. By 1990 language problems will be handled by machines. But even with these new tools the tourist industry will remain very much the service industry, that gives many employment opportunities.

A negative factor, no doubt, is the high cost of food, water and electricity, and as a result, of labour. We will never be able to compete price-wise with many

other vacation areas and must always be alert not to price ourselves out of the market. But very few tourist destinations offer the combination of qualities we can offer. Always the right temperature for the beach, almost permanent sun, safety and good service are factors of prime importance. Florida is too cold in the winter and many other resorts are no longer what they used to be. Even Hawaii has seen a decline in tourism this year (since 1949!) because of high fares and rising crime.

Some claim that tourism is too vulnerable as a foundation for the economy of our island. It is true that in times of recession or depression the number of tourists from a certain country may drop. But this can be solved by applying the principle of diversification. The need for vacation resorts will not diminish. As long as the USA, Western Europe and most of Latin America remain capitalist and democratic, there will always be a large section of the population capable of saving enough money to get away from the hectic life of the cities and enjoy some time in the sun of our island.

Although this is not yet accepted by all, tourism is and should remain our main industry. And what is more: it can be our own industry, working with local capital, local management and local shareholders. We ourselves can decide whether that industry will be successful.

**Efficiency**

It is most important that we believe in our opportunities and our future, but it is also essential that we learn from our mistakes and those made by other countries. If we go on as we have in the past years – taking inefficiency for granted, allowing red-tape to choke development, having no government planning and no good cooperation between government, labour and business – the future will be dark and turbulent, as it will be for other countries failing to face up to the challenges of the 80's.

Points of major importance for a successful economy in the 80's are:

- An economic development plan with incentives for investment, no red-tape and an efficiently operated development bank;
- Long term (25 yrs) mortgages for homes and commercial real estate projects;
- A permanent social-economic deliberation board, consisting of government, labour and business, brainstorming the problems of the economy and striving ►



to obtain and preserve harmony between the three partners;

- Efficiency in government;
- Balanced government budgets;
- Maximum efforts to save energy;
- Permanent and highly professional tourist development board;
- Training courses adjusted to the needs of business and industry;
- Modern telecommunication systems and optimal airline connections.

**Foundation**

A successful execution of these points will create a sound foundation for the economy of our island. We do not have to bother with supply-side or Keynes' economic theory, because stimulating demand will never be a solution to our economic problems. We are exporters of services and the more volume our exports get, the more foreign exchange, needed to buy the basic necessities for our people, will come in. Growth will have to be our object and growth is only

possible if all sectors of our community work closely together to improve our product.

**Income**

With sufficient economic growth the income of the lower paid workers can slowly be increased and our social security framework extended. Here we should follow the German example: creating the wealth before spending it and not the reverse of spending first and then finding out that the economy cannot support the expense, as so many European countries did.

Our wages are high in comparison with many surrounding countries but low if we look at the cost of living. We must understand, however, that we are vulnerable in this respect. Increased labour cost will easily bring our economy to the danger zone where the tourist industry will lose the market.

We should also be careful to maintain a reasonable balance between the cost of labour and the return on invested

capital. If the return on investments falls below the interest on government or mortgage bonds a critical situation will develop meaning that capital for renovation and new investments will not readily be available. For the time being, labour will have to be satisfied that it has been and still is possible to give wage increases equal to the increase of the cost of living. Even very strong economies like that of the USA have not been able to do this! But to continue this we will have to realize substantial economic growth. Only in that case can we perhaps begin to level up the lower scales of the minimum wages and improve our social security system.

Our starting position for the 80's is certainly not bad, particularly if compared to many other islands and countries. But to reach 1990 with a strong and healthy economy, which is very well possible, we have to be willing to learn from our mistakes, to do some long term planning and above all work together in close cooperation. ■



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# Shell Curacao's no. 1 man moderately optimistic

*Trust in the press is at a bare minimum. Confidence in the future of Curaçao a little above moderate. Concern about the government's price setting on gasoline genuine.*

Rob de Vos, general manager of Shell Curaçao, chooses his words with care. He has had his share of unfair journalism biased by anti-multi-nationalism. When in guarded phrases he voices a moderate optimism with regard to the future of the Curaçao refinery, he might on the other hand be suspected of political blarney. More so as he is deeply concerned about the price-control policy of the Antillean government. But in fact he has a strong argument backing him up: shareholders have decided to invest 125 million guilders (US\$ 70 million) in the plant between now and 1982.

## Change

Investing such a relatively large sum of money reflects a change of policy, according to Mr. de Vos. During the past years the company did not spend more than 20 million guilders yearly for this purpose. The reason behind the decision is Shell's need for a new Thermal Cracking Unit to upgrade the short residue of processed crude. Expectations are that in the future incoming crudes will be of a heavier structure. In order to keep the secondary capacity of the refinery, which produces a wide range of specialized oil products, running, the old thermal cracking unit which was built in the early forties needs to be replaced by a new and larger one. The decision obviously reflects a measure of confidence on the part

of the shareholders in the viability of the refinery in the coming years. As the company is still the largest employer on the island, contributing 30%-35% of the G.N.P., this may in turn create badly needed confidence on the part of the population and other investors.

## Difficult times

There is on the other hand no reason for great optimism. A large refinery like the Curaçao plant depends almost entirely on the demand of the world market. Due to economizing on the use of energy in the developed world and the economic recession, the consumption of oil has dropped considerably. During 1980 consumption in the USA declined with 7% and in Japan with as much as 9%! This has led to a surplus of crude. Mr. de Vos estimates that tankers anchored offshore Aruba hold 25 million barrels of oil, which the owners are keeping back hoping to get a better price as consumption picks up again.

The corresponding abundance of oil products on the world market forces their prices to go down, which implies insufficient margins for the refineries to cover their costs. The diminished demand has already caused refineries like the Curaçao plant to slow down production. In the latter's case the bottom line has more or less been reached. Curaçao's refinery has a capacity of 362,000 barrels per



Rob de Vos (47) has served with Shell for almost 20 years. One week after taking his finals in mechanical engineering at Delft, Holland, he started his career at Shell's headquarters in The Hague. Having served the company in Pernis, Mombassa, Curaçao, Iran and again in Holland, he was appointed general manager of the Curaçao Refinery in 1977. He maintains that he has no knowledge of a new posting coming up soon, as rumors would have it. Mr. de Vos is married and father of three daughters.

day. But presently just under 200,000 are being processed. From a purely technical point of view a considerable further drop in production is apparently not possible.

All this implies that 1981 will be a most difficult year for the oil industry. However, Shell Curaçao proved in the past to be able to survive lean years.

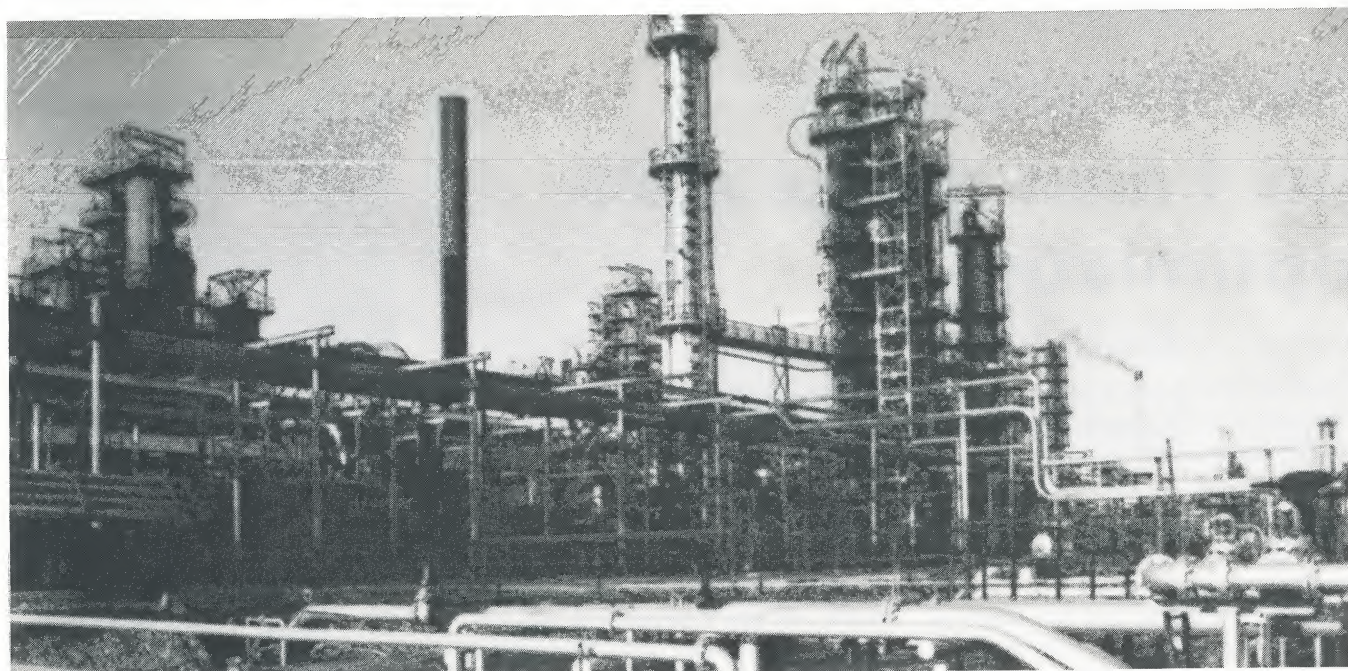
## Survival

The basis for this ability to survive was laid in the late seventies. During that decade drastic changes took place in the world of energy supply. They are well known. One of the immediate results for Shell-Curaçao was the loss of the American market. Although some com-



## CURACAO

photo Shell



*To be replaced*

pensation was found elsewhere, the company had to reduce production to 60% of its capacity and consequently began to incur deficits. In 1977 its losses amounted to US\$ 50 million.

Tightening up of standards and performance brought about notable improvements with regard to efficiency and productivity. Optimal use of the plant's flexibility to respond to changing demands on the market resulted in cutting back the deficit in 1978 to US\$ 4 million.

Although this improvement was largely due to a much more favourable market, mr. de Vos is convinced that the company would not have been able to respond to that situation as well as it did without the measures mentioned above.

This applies even more to 1979 and 1980 when profits were made of US\$ 220 million and US\$ 80 million.

The presently undertaken investments in the refinery itself aim at keeping the company prepared for future developments.

### **Venezuela**

Negotiations with Venezuela about a possible joint venture may in the

long run prove to be of great importance. Such a move would contribute to the continuity of the refinery, which was originally built to process Venezuelan crude and still handles 140.000 barrels daily from its southern neighbour. Started in 1978 the talks have not yet yielded any results, but as the energy situation keeps changing, positive results may well be coming forth in the near future. Presently both parties have agreed to allow each other time for reconsideration. Although such a joint venture might be economically attractive to the island itself, many politicians fear an undue influence by Venezuela on the local and national affairs resulting from such a bargain. Reason why both the island and national government have indicated to be interested in actively partaking in a possible deal.

Rumors that Shell is trying to sell the refinery lock stock and barrel to Venezuela are, according to mr. de Vos, completely fictitious, if only because Venezuela is not interested in obtaining even a majority share in the company.

### **Mexico**

Contacts with the other large oil

producing country in the region are developing slowly. The Mexicans approached Shell-Curaçao last year about processing their crude with the intention of keeping the sale of products to themselves.

This appeared economically not viable. Profits on the sale of their crude proved simply to be more attractive. But this may change leaving open the possibility of future cooperation between this country and the refinery, which is well equipped to process the heavy Mexican crude and already has a long standing commercial relationship with Pemex.

Even now Shell-Curaçao handles 10,000 barrels of Mexican crude daily under the so-called Venezuelan-Mexican Accord, which allows countries in the region to buy oil at very favourable conditions. In connection to this it should be noted that Shell-Curaçao supplies the region up to 25% of its needs.

### **Employment**

The significance of a continued presence of the refinery for the economy of the Netherlands Antilles has already been indicated. ►



No hopes should be harboured on the other hand with regard to the pressing unemployment problem. Shell, the largest employer on the island, is still providing work for 2614 people. But this number will slowly decrease rather than increase. Close cooperation with the government and trade-unions aims at making this process as painless as possible. The fact that a substantial percentage of the employees are in the older age-groups does help.

Mr. de Vos draws attention to the fact that more than 90% of Shell's employees are Antillean. A remarkable high percentage of which the country can be rightfully proud.

The general manager shows some pride himself when he announces that Shell in spite of a moratorium on staffing, still accepts Antillean graduates from universities and

technical schools. This is being done with a view to long term needs. It will also eventually reduce the number of expatriates, presently 130, working with Shell.

#### Gasoline

Serious concern is expressed by mr. de Vos when discussing the price of gasoline on the island. Price control measures by the government have created a situation in which the cost of one litre crude is higher than that of one litre gasoline. As an consequence Shell has in effect been subsidizing the island for as much as US\$ 10 million during 1980!

But what worries mr. de Vos even more is that the people on the island are being spoiled in no small measure. Energy will never again be a cheap commodity and people should learn to face that reality. The present government's policy

does not exactly stimulate much needed economizing.

The fear of politicians that increasing the price of gasoline to an economically acceptable level would be upsetting, is ill founded, as also the Antillean consumer is well aware of the real cost of oil products. The latest increase (January 1981) caused no protests. In fact the market adapted quite well. Only on Aruba was consumption reduced during the first quarter of the year as compared to the same period in 1980 (5.1%).

Proposals by Shell to the government to accept the company's system of postings i.e. special rates for long term clients which follow increases in the price of crude in a delayed manner (and vice versa), have as yet not been accepted. Mr. de Vos sincerely doubts the wisdom of the government's policy in this respect. ■



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## News in brief

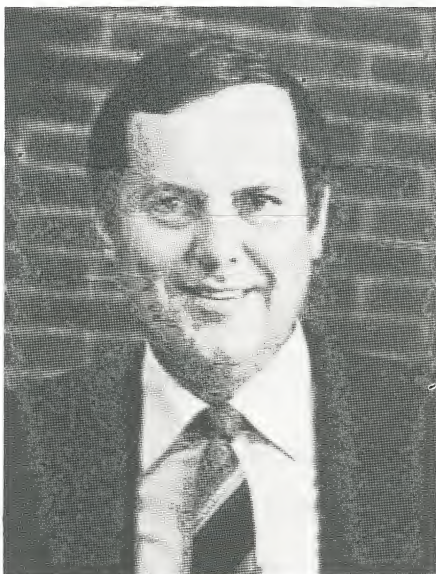
by E. Wilson-Bosch

Mr. Tom Westermeijer recently visiting Sint Maarten announced a drastic change in the masterplan of his gigantic condominium empire on the island. Much to the pleasure of environmentalists it has been decided to take away some of the massiveness of the project by giving up plans to build in pyramid style. Instead two storey condominiums will be erected around a projected marina.

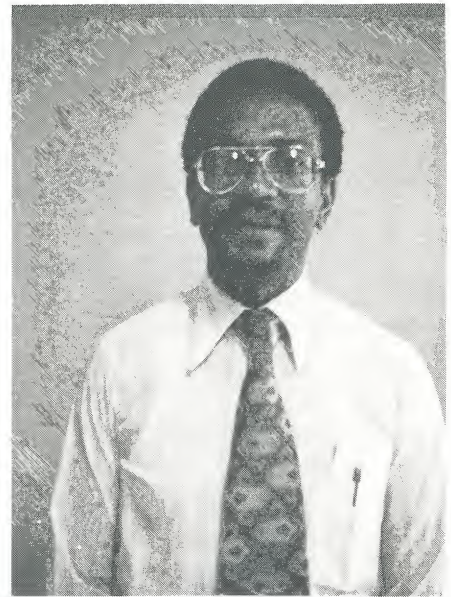
This change of plans concerns the third and fourth phase of the Westermeijer project. Phase nr. 1, a 72 unit/2-bedroom condominium building, known as the "Belair Beach Hotel" was recently completed.

Mr. Westermeijer expects construction on 184 one-bedroom units divided over 4 penthouses, 12 garden terrace units and 168 regular units to start in September next. All units of this second phase have been pre-sold. Using the 'system construction' method this phase should be completed in 24 months. As can be seen from the sales' records, Europeans in particular are interested in the project.

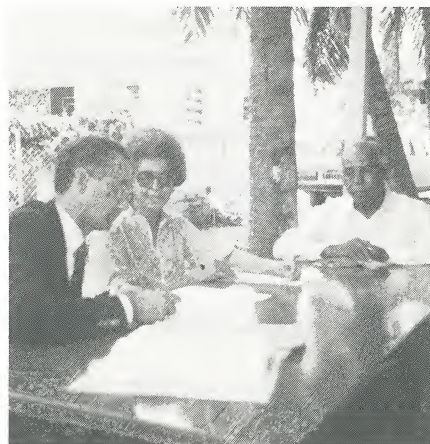
*T. Westermeyer*



Windward Island's literature was recently enriched by the publication of mr. Wycliffe Smith's second collection of poems, titled 'Mind adrift'. The poems reflect the author's feelings about his native island Saba and life in the Windward Islands in general. Mr. Smith, who heads the department of education, is presently preparing an essay on "the other side of poetry in the Dutch Antilles". The essay will inform the reader on Windward Island literature and seek to answer the question, what prompted the authors to write.



*Wycliffe Smith*



*Signing contract*

The Foundation Belinah, which aims at improving knowledge with respect to nutrition and health care, early May signed an agreement with Holland's representative mr. B. H. A. van der Wolf for Naf. 138,000.- in development-aid. The money, contrary to other Dutch funded projects, will go to the foundation's programmes rather than infrastructure.

The foundation, which was established on December 20, 1979, runs an impressive programme ranging from psychological counseling, health and nutrition education in schools, ecological projects to regular media broadcasts. ■



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## Economic survey

by H. C. Beers

Up till now there are no detailed data concerning the balance of payments for the first quarter of 1981 available. However, the foreign exchange reserves continued to show a rather favourable development. The corresponding period during last year resulted in a surplus of f. 3.3 million, whereas the first three months of 1981 closed with a deficit of f. 6.6 million. The surplus of f. 3.3 million was mainly due to accelerated transfers from foreign banking accounts by the oil refineries owing to profit tax payments. This year non of such accelerated transfers have been recorded. Usually the oil refineries pay their profit taxes, and consequently make their transfers in the beginning of the third quarter. It is expected that in 1981 the total amount concerned will be more than twice the amount paid in 1980.

Especially the island government of Aruba will benefit from this substantial increase. The island government of Curaçao will suffer from the loss of income from Curaçao Oil Terminal (see AR vol. 1, nr. 3, page 15).

### Balance of payments

The foreign exchange reserves held by the Central Bank and private deposit banks amounted to f. 198 million as per the end of March 1981, which is about f. 40 million

more than at the end of March 1980. The calendar year 1980 recorded a surplus of f. 52.2 million. In view of the expected sizable transfers by the oil refineries the prospects for the 1981 balance of payments are rather favourable. Besides, the Dutch Government may again compensate for the interest payments and redemptions due on the funded debt to the Netherlands. Last year the Dutch government compensated in this respect for balance of payment purposes up to f. 34.2 million. This amount improved the foreign exchange reserves and was used to redeem the Central government's debt to the Central Bank. At the end of March 1981 this debt amounted to f. 89.5 million compared with f. 119 million a year before.

### Money supply

During February 1981 the broadly defined money supply comprising coins and notes in circulation, checking accounts and time as well as savings deposits, for the first time surpassed the amount of f. 1 billion. The money supply as defined amounted to f. 1.020 billion at the end of February 1981, recording an increase of f. 133 million or 15% compared with the corresponding months in 1980. The two main sources of money creation in this period appeared to be the surplus on the balance of payments and lending by the deposit banks to the private sector,

which increased by f. 98 million or 15% in the same period. This amount is not high compared with the current rate of inflation and the need for productive investments to alleviate the existing unemployment situation, especially on Curaçao. The prevailing view is that domestic savings are high enough, but that there is a lack of job creating investments by both the public and the private sector.

### Exchange rates

The fully open economy of the islands comprising the Netherlands Antilles depends almost completely for its development and prosperity on foreign influences. As known, the main pillars are oil refining, tourism, transportation and offshore services. In general foreign developments have immediate effects on the local economies. A well known example is inflation, which is imported together with the merchandise concerned. Price increases abroad and growing transportation costs result in higher prices on the local markets owing to the fact that all goods must be imported from overseas. In this respect foreign exchange rates are an important aspect.

The Netherlands Antilles guilder is pegged by law to the U.S. dollar. The banks buy this dollar at a rate of f. 1.79 and sell at f. 1.81. The Central Bank officially quotes rates for some other currencies as well, such as the Venezuelan Bolivar, the Dutch guilder, the Pound Sterling, the Swiss Franc, etc. The Bolivar is also pegged to the U.S. dollar, so quoting a rate creates no difficulty.

The rates for the other currencies are the result of supply and demand on the international market. In the Netherlands Antilles the foreign exchange market is too small in terms of supply and demand to quote its own rates on the basis of daily transactions. Therefore the Central Bank sets these rates reflecting the quotations in the international market. For example, the rate for the



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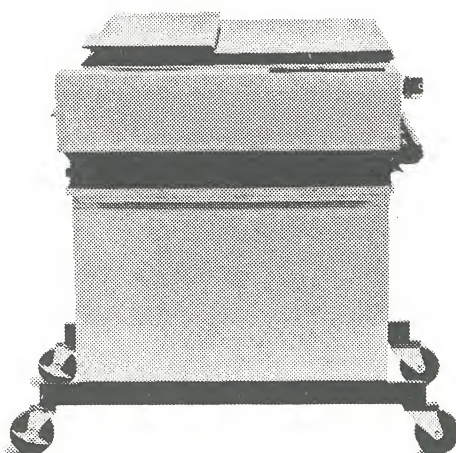
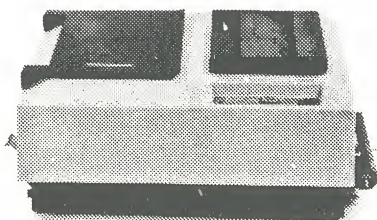
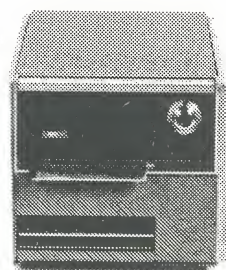
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Dutch guilder is set reflecting the U.S. dollar quotation in Amsterdam. In order to calculate the buying and selling rates for the Dutch guilder, the middle rate for the U.S. dollar (f. 1.80) is divided by the official quotation in Amsterdam for the U.S. dollar expressed in Dutch guilders. On January 2nd, 1981 the official quotation in Amsterdam amounted to Df. 2.1445, resulting in a rate of  $(1.80 : 2.1445 =) f. 0.8394$  or f. 83.94 per 100 Dutch guilders. To arrive at the buying and selling rates, a margin of f. 0.40 is subtracted or added. Thus on before-mentioned date a buying rate was quoted for checks and transfers of f. 83.54 per 100 Dutch guilders and a selling rate of f. 84.34. By doing so the rate for the Dutch guilder in the Netherlands Antilles reflects the development of the U.S. dollar in Amsterdam. Since the beginning of 1981 the U.S. dollar climbed in value from Df. 2.14 to Df. 2.45 as per February 16, 1981. Thereafter this rate amounted roughly between Df. 2.30 and Df. 2.40, but reaching a top at the beginning of May with a rate of Df. 2.52. Consequently the rate of the Dutch guilder expressed in N.A. guilders fell from f. 0.84 to f. 0.71 or by 15%. This decline makes imports from the Netherlands, which constitute about 20% of total imports, cheaper. It certainly compensates for price rises occurring in Holland and may influence the declining acceleration of inflation during the first months of this year. The consumer price index increased during January and February but the growth was less than the corresponding months in 1980. In January of this year the index climbed 1.9% and in February 0.7% against 2.2% and 1.4% respectively in the first two months of 1980. The annual inflation rate declined from 16% in December 1980 to 14.8% in February 1981.

### Energy

Foreign price increases also affected the cost of domestic energy

consumption which must be completely imported. The available data for the islands of Aruba and Curaçao show that the total amount of energy consumption in 1980 grew by 4.8% to f. 237 million. The breakdown is shown in the following table:

Domestic energy consumption; f. million				
	1980	1979	change	
Curaçao	167	110	57	= 52%
Aruba	70	50	20	= 40%
	<u>237</u>	<u>160</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>= 48%</u>

The annual increase in energy is almost completely due to price increases; in volume the growth is probably less than 5%. The substantial change for Curaçao (f. 57 million or 52%) is mainly the result of an increase in the amount of sales of motor gasoline, which climbed with f. 11 million or 28% to f. 50 million, and the use of gasoil by the local electricity company KAE. The latter bought expensive gasoil instead of fuel oil which is cheaper. Sales of gasoil increased by f. 26 million or 30% and of fuel oil by f. 12 million. On Aruba sales of motor gasoline also grew 28%, which represented the 1979 permitted increase by the central government, to a level of f. 18 million. The consumption of fuel oil by the local electricity company WEB reached a level of f. 49.4 million in 1980 representing an annual increase of f. 18 million or 55%. The sales of both motor gasoline and fuel oil did not change in terms of barrels. Of course also the national airline ALM was affected by the higher prices for energy, in particular jet fuel. In volume its consumption stayed on the same level but prices increased tremendously.

### Interest rates

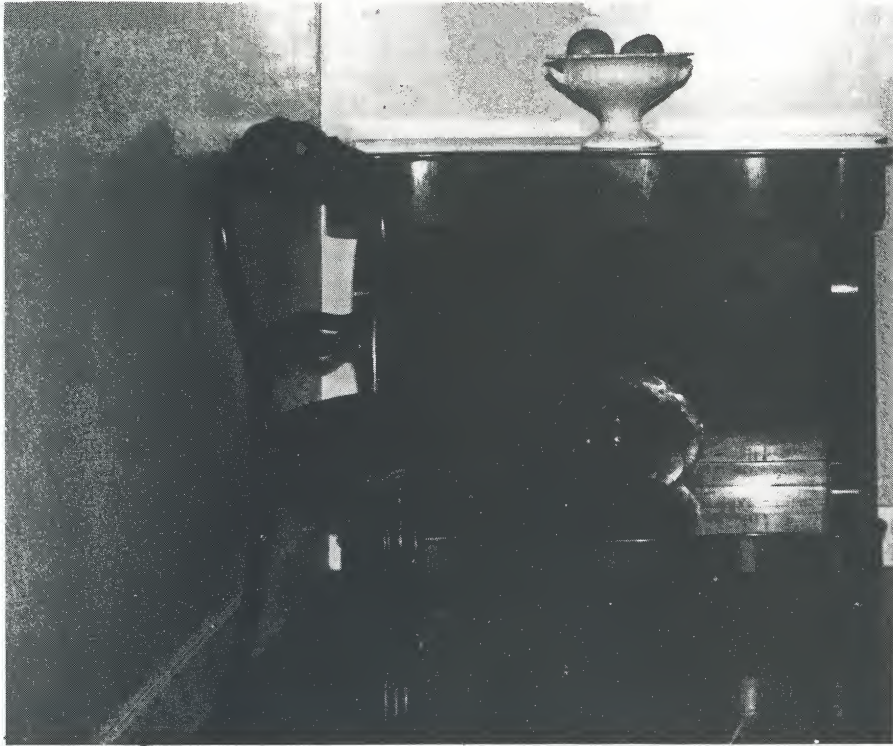
Contrary to foreign price increases which almost immediately affect prices in the local merchandise market, the interest developments

abroad had fewer consequences for the domestic money and capital market. Interest rates showed only very few changes during the previous months and in general did not reach the very high level as recorded abroad, especially in the U.S.A. and Venezuela. The

debit interest charged by the private deposit banks for advances in current account remained in the range of 10 to 12%. Interest rates paid on deposits increased a little bit, which was probably caused by the bonds issue on behalf of the Central Government yielding an interest of 12 1/2%. The banks are now paying up to 8-10% for long term deposits. Savings accounts are yielding between 5% and 6% interest per annum. This fairly independent development of domestic interest rates is very remarkable for an open economy such as the Netherlands Antilles. In particular because there are no indications that domestic savings decreased or that investors turned to a great extent to foreign investments. For capital outflow to abroad was not sizable; as already mentioned the balance of payments for 1980 even recorded a substantial surplus and the foreign exchange reserves continued to stay at a high level during the first quarter of 1981. Domestic savings are probably partly insensitive to changes in interests. In particular private persons continued to save with the banking system by way of passbooks or savings accounts at a relatively low rate. Compared with inflation these people do not get a proper compensation for price increases. In fact real interest rates in the Netherlands Antilles have been negative for quite some time. ■



## Curacao cabinet-makers rediscovered



*Glowing* with a warm and sterling beauty they conjure up before the observer's eye long lost days of closely knit family life in the spacy galleries of the cool plantation houses so typical of Curaçao.



"I remember", writes John de Pool, "that no hall was considered complete without a large mirror, golden framed and beautifully ornamented with embossed figures. The taller they were, the better. Some rooms would hold even eight of them reaching down to the floor."





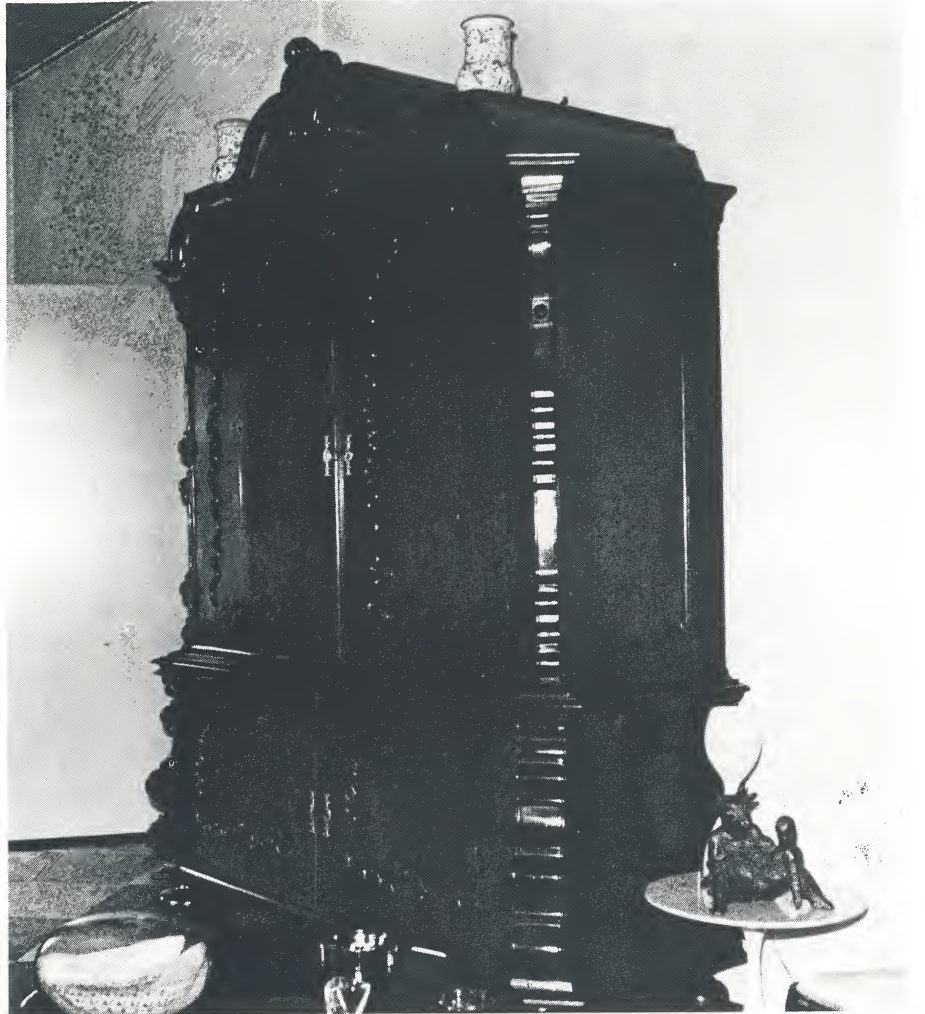
"There were the heavy wall tables, carried by one single pedestal resting on three small feet. It was astonishing to see how many were brought out when at a *soirée dansant* supper was served. The large, impressive sideboards of deep brown mahogany gave to the dining room an air of sedateness and calm. A reassuring solidity into which the dining table, also of genuine mahogany — be it less delicately finished but no less indestructible — fitted well."



Now, as interest in colonial furniture is growing — even in Europe — collectors are becoming curious as to its origin and in particular about the men, who so painstakingly created this splendid joinery. But their names have been erased from history or so it seems. Even the small street, where they practised their trade and which was called "cabinet-makers alley" has partly disappeared from Willemstad's scene.



F. Lewis Hincley in "A Directory of Antique Furniture" holds that "furniture brought to St. Croix and St. Thomas by the Danes, Dutch, Irish and English, and also from America, was copied and adapted according to existing requirements". This, according to Hincley, must have taken place in pre-Napoleonic times. From the late 18th century on, local, often coloured, craftsmen developed their own distinct style. The same applies, no doubt, to Curaçao.



Vice-Admiral A. Kikkert, Governor-General of Curaçao and dependencies, reports in 1817: "we have no lack of artisans . . . of whom the cabinet makers in particular are quite excellent, almost as good as in Europe."



M. D. Teenstra, who published his "Dutch West Indian Islands" in 1837, agrees: "the furniture is beautiful, made of mahogany by Curaçao joiners". But he also notes that the richness of the wood surpasses the quality of the artisan's work. An observation, which applies to all colonial furniture. Technical possibilities after all were far less than

in the renowned cultural centres of Europe.

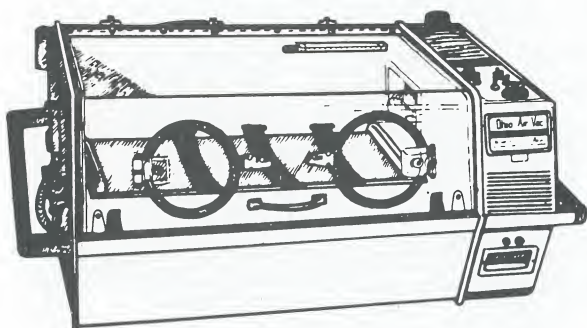
By the middle of the 19th century the trade loses its significance, even though Curaçao furniture was displayed at exhibitions in Amsterdam during the years 1859 and 1883. Apparently the art was rewarded meagerly — many cabinet-makers were actually living in dire circumstances — according to historians. Soon they are no longer to be found on the island.

But recognition of their mastery is growing and as their works of art are finding their way into Europe's museums, their names may be rediscovered and given the honour they deserve. ■



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# Proposed restrictions on legal profession not opportune

by W. Luiten

The legal profession is a liberal profession.

Everyone in the possession of the required certificates is admitted to the bar.

Lately voices are being heard in Parliament to put limitations on this. This attempt by a few members of parliament is no doubt understandable, but it does inevitably hold some dangers.

## Not enough experience

According to the Central Government Lawyer's Ordinance each person of Dutch nationality who has passed the final examination for a law degree or the so-called lawyer's examination, may request registration as a lawyer at the Court of Justice.

During the debate on the Budget in parliament a few members urged the Minister of Justice to have this provision of the ordinance amended. According to these members persons who have just graduated as a rule lack the necessary experience to establish themselves as independent lawyers immediately after finishing their studies.

The Minister reacted positively on these remarks and promised to start with preparations for the necessary amendments in the ordinance.

## Practical training

Presumably these changes will entail the introduction of an obligatory practical training period. A person who has completed his studies and wishes to function as a lawyer, will then be obliged to work for a number of years as a trainee in an established law firm

before being allowed to work as an independent lawyer.

This solution is the one most likely to be adopted. In many countries a training period is obligatory. However, the question is whether this system is going to work in a small-scale country like the Antilles. When the legislator demands an obligatory practical training period, there must also be a guarantee that training opportunity will be available for the one who wants to become a lawyer. This, however, is not in the hands

of the legislator, but in those of the established lawyers. The risk is not imaginary that the latter group may try to dam the stream of new lawyers to this liberal profession by putting a strong limit on the places available for training.

As a consequence the liberal profession will no longer be liberal.

## Rigid

The last years have brought considerable changes in the legal profession. It is increasingly being realized that the exercise of this profession is not free from values. Political desideratums are intruding upon the law. This is evident in e.g. the organization of legal education, but also clearly visible in the way legal assistance is given. Lawyers' collectives and legal shops (tienda di ley) are the symptoms. A danger inherent in introducing a practical training system is that it may become a co-option system. This might obstruct the necessary changes. The legal profession might in the long run degenerate into a closed caste that places self-interest above providing legal assistance.

## European lawyers

Another item now in discussion is the admittance to the bar in the Netherlands Antilles of the European Dutch. Based on the Central Government Decree "Admittance and Expulsion" a foreigner or European Dutchman may only carry out work here against payment, if he has been granted a permit to do so. In parliament questions were also asked concerning requests for admittance of a number of European Dutch lawyers. A few Antillean law offices are associated with Dutch partners and in the framework of this association consider it desirable to mutually exchange employees for a certain period. The questions in parliament had as objective to convince the Minister not to grant aforesaid permits in order to protect employment opportunities for Antillean lawyers. ▶



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Apart from the question whether the opportunity for work really needs to be protected — the demand for years has surpassed the supply — it may well be that neither employment opportunity nor the quality of legal assistance will be well-served by a restrictive policy. Precisely due to the association with large law firms elsewhere in the world a number of offices here have prospered a great deal and are also forced to work according to qualitative standards maintained in other countries with greater mutual competition.

#### Admittance to the bar

An open admittance to the bar is of vital interest in order to maintain a healthy legal profession, but

also for the further development of our society. The legal profession in its present form contributes in various ways to the development of our community. On the one hand by giving legal assistance to the poor and those of limited means, and on the other hand by providing service for multinational enterprises. It must at all costs be prevented that a closed legal profession will be formed, which will let self-interest prevail and will allow commercial activities to predominate, thus putting social legal assistance under still more pressure.

It must on the other hand be avoided that a supposed necessary protection of employment opportunities for lawyers will have as a consequence that the contact with the internationally oriented legal

profession will be lost. Narrow-minded self-interest is hardly compatible with rendering service on international level.

There is still a lot to be done. Social legal assistance urgently requires improvement and expansion; a large field of activities is still undeveloped in this area. The support of enough lawyers operating on international level is indispensable for the development of the Antilles into a centre of international service. Further restriction of admittance to the legal profession at this moment therefore in my opinion does not seem to be in the interest of further social and economic development of the Antilles. ■

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## Social pragmatism



Social security laws have increasingly proved to be a rope around the neck of many governments in the developed world, notably in Europe. The point, apparently, is well taken by mr. Jules Eisden, minister of Social Affairs in the Antilles. Trying to adhere to the basic principles of social justice and with a firm eye on the country's financial possibilities, mr. Eisden has embarked on a programme aimed at improving medicine supply, health insurance and old-age pensions. His pragmatic approach is receiving widespread support and seems to hold the promise of a viable future.

### Medicine supply

The supply of medicine has up till now been taken care of by privately owned import firms. Government regulations concerning assortment, price-control and quality inspection are almost non-existent. A situation which led to an estimated 7% failure to meet the demand of pharmacies during last year and relatively high prices on a number of products. A first measure taken by mr. Eisden to secure the availability of a responsible — both item and price wise — assortment was the installation of a formula-committee. A first draft of a list containing those medicines the government's NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE (SVB) will pay for, has recently been drawn up and will be submitted for comments to both importers and doctors. The list shows a limitation on variety and exercises an indirect price-control.

As more and more people will be able to make use of the services of NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE (see following) this measure will no doubt promote a general improvement. Minister Eisden told AR that the list will be put into operation on the 1st of July of this year.

A next step being considered is the establishment of a National

Retail Board, which — though buying from the private import firms — would secure an even more effective control on assortment and prices.

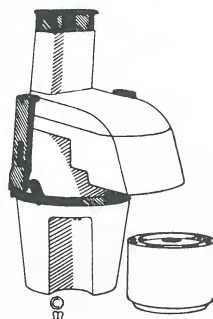
### Generics

A most promising development envisaged is the possible local production of generic medicines i.e. medicines not protected by trademark registration. Medicaforma, the largest producer of generic medicines in the Netherlands, has offered the government its services. As quite a number of pharmaceutical products will lose their trademark protection in the coming years, this seems promising indeed. Mr. Eisden mentioned a cost-saving factor of 20% and employment for some twenty chemist-assistants.

### More to benefit

National Health Insurance in the Netherlands Antilles has been compulsory for employees earning no more than NAf. 1,040.—(1980) per month. Mr. Eisden raised the ceiling to NAf. 1,430.— and proceeded to apply the principle of the cost of living index. At present the figure stands at NAf. 1,690.—, thus providing an extra 8000 people with the benefits of the system. Mr. Eisden aims at bringing in all employees by January 1982. The afore mentioned ceiling, however, will be maintained. Those earning more and wishing to have better conditions will have to take out an additional policy. This way another 12.000 people will benefit

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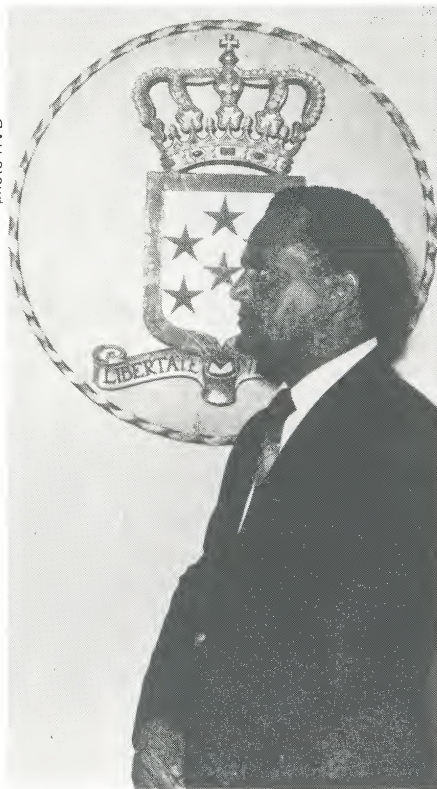
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from the National Health Insurance, the costs of which are shared by employers and employees equally. For many employers this will mean a considerable alleviation as premiums of privately concluded insurance policies have become very costly. A next move, considered by mr. Eisdén, is to allow family members of employees to join the system. Premiums can be kept low as no payments will have to be made for sickleave, which in the case of employees take up almost 50% of the National Insurance's budget.

**Pensioners also**

A last phase will be to include old-age pensioners. Mr. Eisdén intends to increase the old-age pensions to compensate for the compulsory payment of premiums. Due to bad administration and a failing system of collecting the payments on the general and compulsory Old-Age Pension Insurance, mr. Eisdén figures that approximately



Jules Eisdén

Naf. 200,000,000.— are presently outstanding. A reorganization of the tax-collectors' office, now being undertaken, should result in such an increase of income that the pensions can be increased accordingly.

**Forethought**

In order to allow people to secure better conditions for their old-age, mr. Eisdén has proposed the introduction of an additional compulsory Old-Age Insurance Policy. Premiums will be low (2% of the yearly income) and shared equally by employer and employee. The proposal, however, includes the possibility of securing a higher pension by increasing the premium on a voluntary basis. This, no doubt, will be a most welcome solution for those employed by firms, which have no pension arrangements and for the self-employed. Mr. Eisdén expects the new policy to go into operation around July 1982. ■

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## The nation goes on vacation

The travel industry in the Netherlands Antilles is by now a multi-million business. Like in highly developed countries a relatively large percentage of the population will by the end of June pack their cases and join the modern phenomenon of holiday-migration. AR asked the question: where do they go and why? Here are the answers.

### Europe

Many thousands will leave for Europe. A substantial number of them are able to do so because their contracts with the government, oil companies, banks etc. provide them with free round-tickets either yearly or every other year.

But thanks to the relatively low (Kingdom) fares a vacation in Europe is also within reach of those who belong to the middle-income group.

Antilleans moreover do not stay in expensive hotels or take to costly tour programs. Most of their vacation is spent with friends or relatives and for the balance an inexpensive bus tour to London, Paris, Lourdes or Rome completes a 4 — 6 weeks holiday. The more adventurous among them take a Eurail-pass which allows them 2 or 3 weeks of unlimited railtravel on the European continent.

### Colombia

Once the favourite destination of those who do not trust the local doctors and hospitals. But as the expected miracles often did not materialize and inflation hit Co-

lombia, people started to look for other destinations. Now Santo Domingo is in great demand. Ads appear in the local papers recruiting clients for doctors in the Dominican Republic. A new 'hospital-connection' has been established.

### Buying

Miami is called the shopping center of Latin America. And so it is. The question remains, however, whether the savings obtained do indeed outweigh the travel costs and the import duties to be paid upon return. Moreover detailed price-comparisons are seldom made, maybe because of the luring power of the enormous shopping centers. Or is it the idea that what is purchased abroad is better than what can be bought at home? Just watch the arrival of a plane from Miami or Panama and see what and how people try to get through customs.

### Family-vacations

Walt Disney's Kingdom in Central Florida remains the most attractive spot. Travel agents in the Antilles try hard to keep the cost of a trip to Miami or Orlando within the reach of the middle and lower income groups. Yearly 3 to 4 thousand people from the Antilles visit the attractions in Central Florida. The USA is anyhow a favourite destination. The inexpensive steakhouses and coffeeshops guarantee that expenditure on food and drinks is kept within reasonable limits even for people with a small purse.



photo Hart's Camera

But there is probably more to it than just that. Antilleans like cleanliness, a good bathroom and no surprises. Their children are familiar with hot dogs, hamburgers, milkshakes and American TV. That is why a vacation in the USA is preferred to a holiday in Venezuela, Colombia or Costa Rica.

### Culture

Although one might expect a great interest in the cultural riches of countries like Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Guatemala and Mexico, the number of people visiting these places is relatively small.

The history of the Mayas, the Aztecs, Toltecs and Incas apparently has little appeal for Antilleans. Figures indicate that they go abroad mainly for fun and shopping. Moreover they dislike to be confronted with the poverty so prevailing in South and Central America.

The same goes for the Caribbean. Haiti, Antigua and other Caribbean islands are seldom visited, whereas Santo Domingo and Puerto Rico are far more in demand.

In this respect it is interesting to notice that the desire of some Antillean politicians to promote closer links with the region is not reflected in the travel habits of the ►



people as the following percentages (estimated) show:

Where do Antillean vacationers go?

Europe .....	25%
USA .....	35%
Costa Rica, Guatemala, Mexico .....	8%
Venezuela .....	5%
Colombia, Ecuador, Peru . .	3%
Santo Domingo, Puerto Rico .....	12%
Cruises in the Caribbean . . .	2%
Various other destinations .	10%

**local scene**

During the last few years the need to escape from the daily routine has notably grown and so have the local 'packages'. One travel-agent in Curaçao reports an annual growth of 30% in the sale of 'An-

tillean packages' to Aruba and Bonaire.

It should also be observed, however, that the relatively high air fares and hotel rates prevent a lot of people from getting acquainted with the people on their sister-islands. Thousands still remain who have never visited Aruba, Bonaire or Curaçao. St. Maarten, Saba and St. Eustatius seem very far away from the Leeward Islands.

**travel market**

A rough estimate produces a figure between 25 and 30 million guilders spent on prepaid travel-arrangements for vacation purposes. Add to this the purchase of foreign exchange to cover the expenses abroad and it may be assumed that the total amount spent on vacationing outside the Antilles comes close to 100 million guilders annually. Only part of this

flows back into our economy (ALM).

**educational aspect**

One may consider such a drain on our foreign exchange as rather negative in economic terms, but it has a bright side as well. A lot of people on our islands are employed by or closely related to our own tourist industry. Travelling abroad they will be confronted with or involved in handling at airports, car rentals, bus transportation etc. They will see how hotels and motels are run and how tourist-attractions are developed and maintained. They will encounter the rudeness as well as the politeness of other people in the service-industry. All this offers an educational opportunity. Tourism is a people oriented business and also for us there is still a lot to learn. ■



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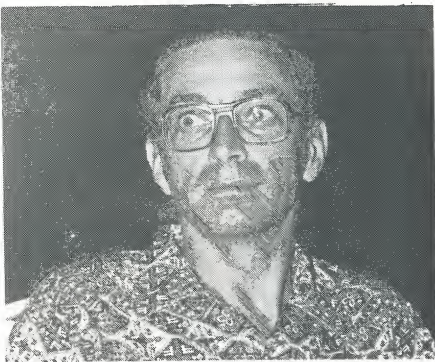
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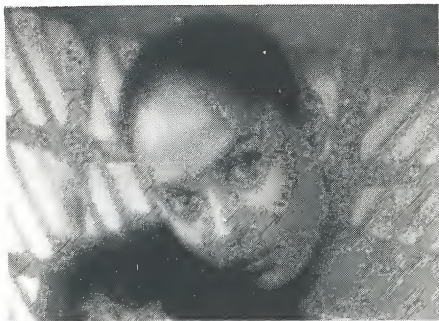


## PEOPLE



Bidding farewell to the Antilles was drs. **B. H. A. van der Wolf**, representative of the Netherlands for development aid. Mr. van der Wolf (38) witnessed a remarkable increase in social, cultural and educational projects during the five years he served in this capacity. Annual expenditure rose from 5 to 15 million guilders during that period, making it necessary to set priorities for the allotment of available Dutch aid. In his opinion it is therefore most important that his successor will be a policy-maker with a good knowledge of development planning. Mr. van der Wolf, who served earlier with the UN for development planning in Jamaica, Chile and Uruguay will next work with the municipal authorities in Rotterdam, in charge of minority policy.

Looking forward to his new job, mr. van der Wolf declares: although there is little time left I feel it is still not too late to tackle the problems caused by the recent influx of (mostly foreign) minority groups in Holland.



Preparing a dance-fashion show soon to be performed in Paramaribo, Surinam born **Immeke Hajari** last May visited Curaçao to seek inspiration with local designers. Daughter of the famous artist Toeti van Binnedijk-Hajari, Immeke made herself a name as ballet dancer. Having trained with well known choreographer Alvin Ailey in New York, she danced for several of the outstanding Dutch fashion houses. Antillean friends love Immeke for her sparkling wit, appreciation of Curaçao and last but not least for her exquisite beauty.



At the occasion of the Queen's birthday he was granted the decoration of Knight in the Order of the Dutch Lion. This most distinguished medal could not have been bestowed on a more deserving person. **J. J. Beaujon** (Japa to everyone in the Antilles) throughout his life, in addition to an important career, first with the Dutch marines, then as Lt. Governor of the Windward Islands and at present with the well-known jeweller's

firm Spritzer and Fuhrmann, has been the driving force in numerous organizations and events. The most recent being the Queen's visit to the Netherlands Antilles. When asked once where he got the time and energy for all this Japa replied: "The day I'm not able to anymore I'll lay down on my bed and stop breathing".

For the whole community's sake: Japa please go on breathing vigorously!

Posted at de Minister Plenipotentiary's office in The Hague with a mission attracting investors for the Netherlands Antilles, **Jacques Hermelijn** recently travelled to these islands accompanied by a group of Dutch industrialists and businessmen. Although the promised sunny weather did not materialize (it was the rainiest season since 1933!), there are hopeful signs that at least a few in the group will in the near future expand their commercial and industrial activities to the kingdom partner in the Caribbean.



"Magic Night" was the aptly chosen name for the fashion show held in Curaçao Hilton Hotel. The audience was thrilled by the clothes shown with verve and imagination by charming models.

As grand finale master of ceremonies **Junior Rodrigo** surprised everyone present with three originals of his own design, demonstrating that besides his qualities as announcer he has considerable talent as designer as well.





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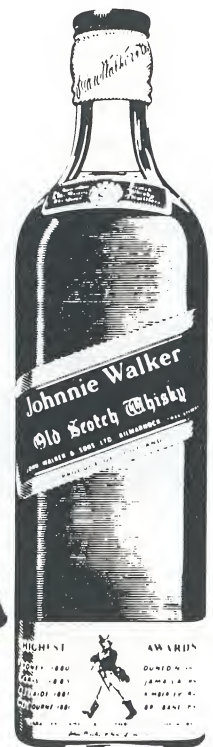
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# Evaluation of foreign diploma's most urgent

by Ralph R. van Breet

"In connection with the reorganisation of our educational system a systematic inventarisation and evaluation of advanced study possibilities in the region, the USA and Canada will be undertaken. Efforts will be made on governmental level to arrive at well balanced agreements with regards to the admittance of and care for Antillean students, and the recognition of diploma's".

From the Martina-Cabinet's declaration of policy 1979-'83.

The intention of the government coincides with a growing desire amongst Antilleans to continue their education at Institutes and Universities in the region. The advantages are many. Those who opt for studying in the Caribbean or nearby America's, however, are faced with one great obstacle: the certificates they may obtain are as yet not recognised officially in their own country.

## Growing interest

Preference shown by young Antilleans for the region is indeed growing. Presently a little over 30% of those who make use of scholarship facilities are following courses at regional institutes of Higher Education (see index 1). A survey amongst Antilleans studying in the Netherlands shows that more than 50% would prefer to do so in the region if they were given the choice (see index 2).

This tendency is understandable. Apart from the fact that the region is presently "en vogue" and allowing for the peer group factor — e.g. the example set by the Lago Scholarship Programme is no doubt one of the main causes for the high rate of Arubans studying in

the USA — there are some real and perceived advantages, such as:

- being closer to home and therefore in less danger of enstrangement;
- being better facilitated to apply the acquired knowledge because of similarities in the socio-cultural realm at least in some of the region's countries;
- being able to make use of the usual campus facilities, which for foreigners has obvious advantages with regards to lodging and social life.

## Disadvantages

On the other hand there is a keen awareness of a number of pro-

blems, not in the least because of the regular appearance in the press of complaints by Antillean students, for example in Colombia, about the poor reception and little assistance they are given. But more fundamental: scholarship allowances until recently were decidedly too low. Those studying in the USA for example received a stipend of US\$ 4220.—. The College Entrance Examination Board, however, estimated expenses for an academic year as:

For private college or university:  
 \$ 9850.—    \$ 7000.—    \$ 5000.—  
 (High cost) (Medium cost) (Low cost)

For public college or university:  
 \$ 7650.—    \$ 5600.—    \$ 3600.—  
 (High cost) (Medium cost) (Low cost)

The most serious disadvantage, however, is the fact that diploma's and degrees from regional educational bodies are as yet not officially recognized in the Antilles.

## General concern

This lack of recognition is not just a problem for the individual graduate. Nor only for the employer, who is confronted with an applicant holding a degree from a regional school. With a view to the increasing number of students making use of the possibilities in the region (see index 3) and the proposed reorientation of our educational system (see quote heading this article) the problem is of general concern, and demands a solution urgently.

INDEX 1: Number of students per country and island of origin. (Neth. Antilles, 1979, excl. Crown and Sticusa scholarships and privately paid studies)

	Neth.	USA	P. Rico	Col.	Ven.	Region	Total
Aruba	364	194	6	46	3	5	600
Bonaire	30						30
Curaçao	522	31	40	27	10	25	655
Windwards	13						13
<b>Total</b>	<b>911</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>1298</b>



## EDUCATION

INDEX 2: Preference for country of study (C. A. Eisden)

	male	female	Total
USA	3	3	6
Netherlands	10	7	17
Caribbean	12	11	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>46</b>

### Appraisal

The question must be raised what exactly is meant by the concept "recognition" of foreign diploma's. For in industry (e.g. Lago), the professions (e.g. hospitals), governments (e.g. Public Works in Aruba) and education (e.g. the university) people are found working who hold foreign diploma's i.e. non-Dutch or Antillean diploma's. One might therefore conclude that the problem is not so much one of recognition but rather one of appraisal.

In general five situations in which recognition and appraisal of foreign diploma's play a role can be distinguished:

- admittance to the University at freshman's level. Example: Does a US-High school diploma or the Colombian bachillerato give entrance to the University of the Neth. Antilles (UNA) and if so, to what faculties?
- admittance to the University at post-graduate level. Example: Does the licentiate in law of the University of Surinam allow a student to continue at the UNA for his or her master's?
- qualification to teach. Example: Is the "baccalaureate degree" of the Division of Teacher Education of The College of the Virgin Islands to be rated as of the same level as the Dutch/Antillean diploma?
- classification in the civil service. Example: How does an American BSW (Bachelor of Social Work) compare to the diploma of the Social Academies in Holland and what are the consequences for appointment and

promotion with regards to the regulations in force?

- recognition of a foreign title. Example: Does the law (see OG (PB) 1979 nr. 27) allow an Antillean who holds an American M.D. (Medical Doctor) to carry the equivalent Dutch form of address?

Obviously the last three situations will be most recurrent.

### Standstill

Until 1979 the Netherlands Universities Foundation for International Cooperation (NUFFIC) took care of the evaluation of foreign diploma's for the Antilles. In 1979 two civil servants of the Department of Education were sent to NUFFIC for training in order that the evaluation could in future be done on the Antilles itself. However, as agreement has not yet been reached on the question of methodology - in par-

ticular whether the NUFFIC method is applicable to the Antillean situation - the whole matter has come to a standstill. A development most detrimental for the parties concerned: the holder of such a diploma and his prospective employer.

It should be remembered at this stage that the Netherlands Antilles since October 6, 1977 are an official member of the "Regional Convention on the recognition of studies, diploma's and degrees in Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean", a body which came into being in 1975 under the auspices of UNESCO. The explicit purpose of this convention is to stimulate progress in the field of diploma recognition between the signatories, being: Panama, Mexico, Chile, Venezuela, Colombia, Cuba, El Salvador, Ecuador, Brasil, the Holy See and as mentioned the Netherlands Antilles.

This too adds to the obligation of the Antillean Government to attend to the matter at hand as soon as possible.

### Method

The key question of course is the method of evaluation. Although much can be learned from the experience of institutions like the

INDEX 3: Aruban scholarship-students according to country of study and year of commencement.

N: National scholarship  
I: Island scholarship

Year	USA			Colombia			Others			Total General
	N	I	Total	N	I	Total	L	E	Total	
1974	1	-	1	2	-	2	-	-	-	3
1975	3	-	3	7	-	7	-	-	-	10
1976	1	2	3	3	1	4	-	-	-	7
1977	5	10	15	1	2	3	1	1	2	20
1978	16	14	30	5	6	11	1	4	5	46
1979	9	41	50	7	4	11	3	3	6	67
1980	5	45	50	-	3	3	-	1	1	54
1981	1	7	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>215</b>





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NUFFIC in Holland, the Zentralstelle für Ausländisches Bildungswesen in West Germany or the ICFES (Instituto Colombiano para el Fomento de la Educación Superior) in Colombia, it remains necessary to develop our own method taking into account the specific Antillean needs.

On another occasion I have already proposed the following criteria for consideration:

- admittance requirements
- length of study
- curriculum
- career possibilities in the country where the diploma is obtained;
- local recognition of the institute at which the diploma is obtained.

In my opinion it is also advisable to adhere to the classification of study-stages as agreed by the signatories of the aforementioned regional convention, i.e. the Anglo-saxon scheme of BA, MA and PhD. A classification which compares in broad lines with the An-

tillean stages of Advanced Vocational Training, Undergraduate studies and Post-“doctoraal”-studies. It should be clear to anyone that not the American Bachelorship but rather a Master’s compares to a Dutch (Antillean) Doctoraal.

### **Ex-ante**

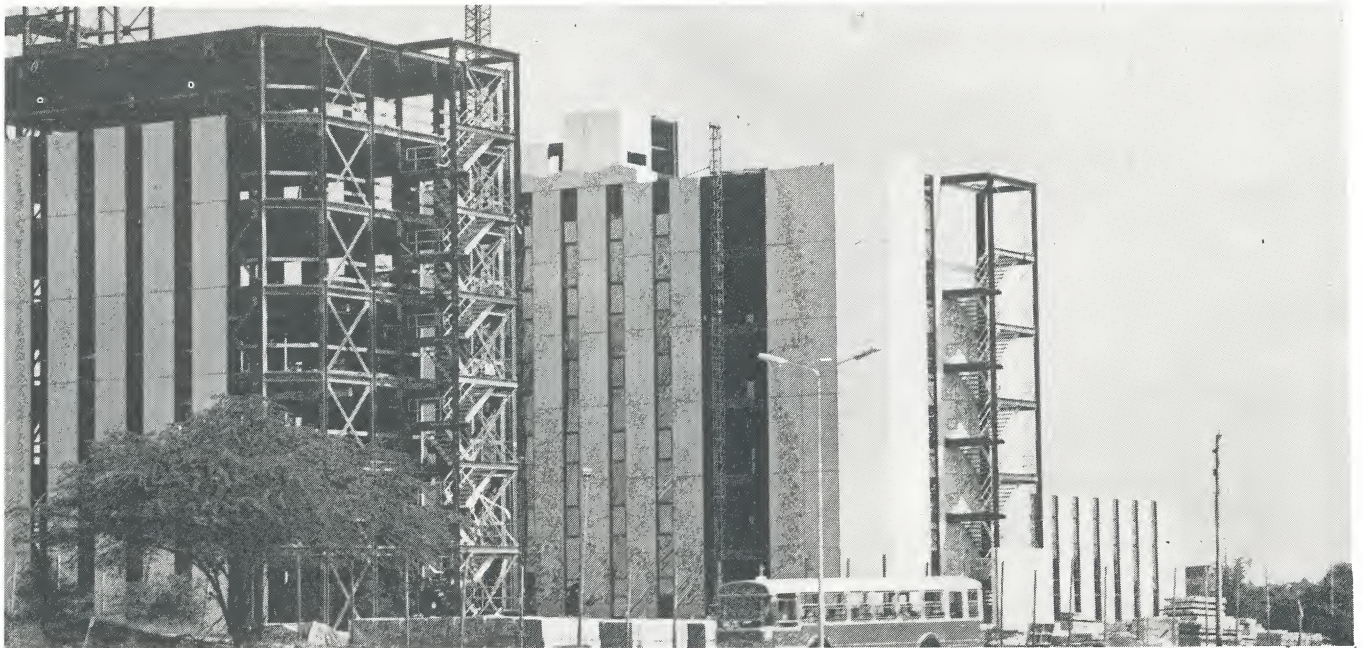
In this analysis we hitherto dealt exclusively with what might be called “ex-post” evaluation i.e. evaluation, appraisal and recognition of diploma’s which have already been obtained. But in my opinion, even if we manage to develop a workable method of evaluation, we have not really solved the problem. It should be remembered that our situation is very different from that of for example Holland and Colombia. The majority of those having obtained a diploma or degree in the just mentioned countries will have done so within those countries. NUFFIC and ICFES will always occupy themselves with the excep-

tions. But in the Antilles the scope of our small university is so limited that most of our young people have to go abroad. And as an increasing number of them prefers to study at Institutes and Universities in the region, the foreign diploma will become rule rather than exception.

A situation which demands an alternative approach or what might be called an “ex-ante” evaluation. By this I mean that there ought to be an official recognition of Institutes and Universities, which are judged to be of an acceptable level, beforehand. Antillean students should be enabled to choose from such a list and be assured that the diploma they are working for will be accepted and recognized without further a do. A method which would forego much waste of time, money and possible disappointment. ■

1) C.E.E.B.: Financial planning for study in the USA, New York 1980.





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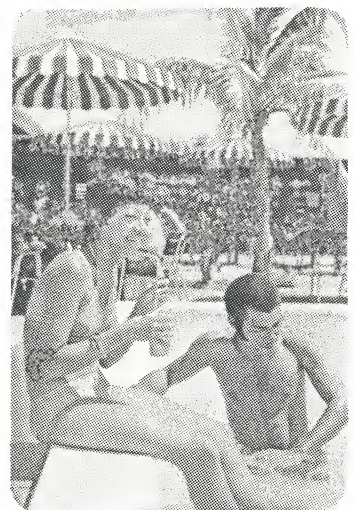


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# Journalism training to get international dimension

Journalism in the Antilles may by geographical necessity be insular, it is by no means self-satisfied. Fighting an uphill battle against low wages, understaffed newsrooms and a general lack of respect for the profession, most journalists are determined to enhance their credibility. When eighteen months ago a first workshop in journalism was organised, a surprising number of reporters attended. Since then such workshops have become a regular feature on most of the islands. Recent developments indicate that the Antilles may even become an international centre of journalism training. If so, the local profession will benefit in more ways than one.

## Flexibility

The small size and insular structure of the country limit the possibilities of training courses in particular for specializations like journalism.

The demand is too small to justify the establishment of a regular school.

Training abroad is a privilege granted only a happy few. The obvious alternative of short term courses for practising journalists is not without its problems either. As all papers are understaffed, day-long workshops of any length of time are out of the question. For the same reason attendance from other islands cannot be hoped for. Consequently any attempt to meet the need for upgrading the profession has to be very flexible both in terms of time and location.

## Success

The solution was found in regularly recurring weeklong workshops on the respective islands held after working hours. Mr. J. de Vos, di-



*J. de Vos and workshopers*

rector of the School of Journalism in Utrecht, flew over from Holland four times within two years to assist the professional press on the Leewards. The University of Florida's school of Journalism sent down Pulitzer prize winner Buddy Davis to Sint Maarten and prof. Fred Parrish to the Leewards to conduct workshops in journalism and press-photography respectively. Mr. H. Folkertsma, editor of a number of well known magazines in the Netherlands, instructed the non-professional press on Aruba and Curaçao as was mentioned in AR's last issue.

This method of on the spot training proved a success and the organizing body, the Foundation

Graphic Media, plans to continue in this vein.

The experience thus acquired may be of great value now that plans are being developed to organize international workshops in journalism and communication policy under the auspices of the University of the Netherlands Antilles. As these workshops will be primarily directed at the Caribbean it should be noted that the structure of the Antilles reflects the structure of the entire region.

## Dutch initiative

In order to contribute to press development in the Third World Dutch journalists developed the idea to set up workshops for col- ▶



leagues of developing countries. Strengthening the democratic process by upgrading 'objective' reporting is said to be the hidden agenda of this project. Funds have been made available by the Dutch government to start with pilot programmes in Africa, South America, the Caribbean and Holland itself. The university of the Netherlands Antilles (UNA) was asked to act as counterpart for the Caribbean effort. The aforementioned foundation agreed to take charge of the local organisation. Not only will such a workshop be of great assistance to the Caribbean press, the international setting will no doubt also boost Antillean journalism. Expectations are that the first of these courses will be held next fall on Curaçao.

**Questions**

Some irritation, however, has been caused by the way the Dutch go about setting up the programme. The organizing body, Radio Nederland Training Centre, is proceeding on a decidedly one-way course. All decision making is done in Holland, the project coordination



photo H. Snow

*Buddy Davis*

is kept in Dutch hands and even the staff is expected to be largely Dutch. The particular problems caused by the regional structure, as described above, are not taken into account. The Antillean counterpart is pressing the Dutch to change their policy. Radio Nederland Training Centre has invited a group of outstanding Third World journalists to brainstorm early June in Hilversum about the content of the courses and hopefully

this meeting will create a proper balance between the parties concerned.

**Media policy**

A very different approach has been taken by the Institute of Social Studies (The Hague, Holland), which has offered the UNA 'assistance' in organizing a workshop on 'communication policy and development' for the Caribbean. The workshop aims at improvement of knowledge and analytical capacity, and development of specific skills pertinent to the formulation, implementation and evaluation of communication policies.

Researchers, policy-makers and practitioners from all over the Caribbean will meet for an intensive 10-day course. The staff will be mostly drawn from the region and other developing countries. It is envisaged that this effort will result in the establishment of an institutional facility for the continuous critical reflection on communication policy making.

The combination of practical training in journalism and reflection on media policy will, no doubt, stimulate the democratic process of development. For the Antilles, which have just recently started to consider the role of the media for the development of society, these projects will be of great value. ■

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## INTROSPECTION

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### Some joke!

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I have not seen Mac for a while now. Formerly he used to drop by at the cafeteria of San Marco and with his piercing eyes, angry face and pepper and salt beard he would offer his services as a shoeshine boy, although he was well over forty.

Some people thought he was crazy. I knew better. I met him when he was building himself up into a union leader, while politicians tried to manipulate him. He was too smart for them and so they made him lose his union following. Mac became an outcast whereas his former union of government-laborers became a political instrument. But, it does not really pay to be smart. One should understand the forces in a small community and adapt oneself in order to become a superior force.

Mac was not really interested. I believe that he became disappointed that his own friends were such damned opportunists, that the only thing they worried about was the next pay-raise. So he threw them the ultimate gauntlet and became a shoeshine boy. Mac, whose name once terrorised politicians, was now a shoeshine boy who would humbly beg if he could shine your shoes. There were no other shoeshine boys and everybody felt a bit embarrassed. It was not proper. Mac should have turned around and asked for mercy or at least he should have found a decent job!

So whenever he appeared at the doors of San Marco the regulars would offer him a cup of coffee and a tip. Forget the shoeshine ..."

It helped your conscience to pay the tip and anyhow, the fellow should have known better than to oppose the establishment. But there were always the uninitiated.

Those who do not understand the mysterious interaction on our island. The "incomprehensible understanding" between the regulars of our community, whether Jewish, Calvinist, Catholic, black, white or purple; whether a member of the national party, the democratic party or the "revolutionary establishment".

Tomorrow we have to live together again, we will need each

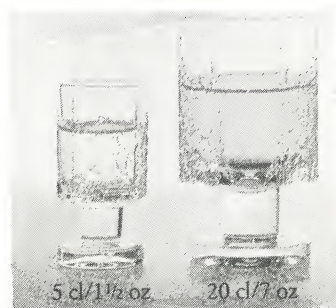
other and we will not offend each other in public. It would not be proper. So everyone understands.

This one day when Mac arrived at the doors of San Marco, we sat there: the regulars, and way up in front, sat this Dutchman with his noble face and grey hair. He looked clean in his white shirt and satisfied with himself, as if he had just taken a shower and scrubbed himself with fragrant soap. He looked you straight in the eyes and spoke with the joyfulness of one who never sinned. Although nobody expressed his thoughts, we were all convinced that he was a preacher of the Dutch Reformed Church. I even thought he was rev. Roger Snow, whom at that time I had not yet met (It was not me – Editor's note).

You know the island, the locals, the regulars, and although by now we have about 160.000 inhabitants, you still wonder who the new faces are. Mac, scanned the place. He was not really looking for a customer; but for a victim to make him suffer the ultimate humiliation in Curaçao: to be served by a shoeshine boy. It would be as if the pope himself came over to San Marco to wash your feet, while you were sipping your coffee, unaware of Easter. When Mac walked over to the Dutchman and humbly asked him: "Allow me to shine your shoes. God will grace you for your kindness...", it became quiet in San Marco. Not even the sounds of the street could be heard. "But of course", said the preacher and thrust his legs outward. "Of course. Go ahead". Mac lifted his arms pathetically and dropped in slow motion on his knees. He put the shoeshine-box down with solemn care and with obvious reverence he took the Dutchman's left foot and placed this on the box. It was quiet. With gracious movements and completely concentrated on the shoe of the left foot, Mac started to clean the leather. "I have to take the dust ▶

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## INTROSPECTION

off...", he explained. And then, with a sincere look in his eyes, he addressed the preacher looking at him while still wiping the shoe: "You know, people think I hate macamba's" — macamba, a dutch gringo in Curaçao — "but that is not true. As a matter of fact, when there were more macamba's in Curaçao, things were better. They work hard and they do not discriminate like negroes do".

"You know something", now he interrupted his job and held his head to one side as if contemplating with his mind far away, "negroes discriminate against each other more than white people do against negroes". After this statement in a loud voice for everybody to hear, he resumed his cleaning job with much attention to details. He rubbed the polish even under the heels of the shoe. The bartender — quite a regular — started to remove the cups and saucers from the Dutchman's table, but nobody paid attention.

"You know", Mac said, "when the Dutch were our masters here in colonial times, things were better. There was no discrimination and they taught us to work. Everything went orderly and there was discipline".

The Dutchman, with the special voice that preachers have cultivated for occasions in which they know that God is on their side, rejected the argument. "We are all children of the same Father. We should not look at black or white. We should love each other and work together for the well being of everybody on this beautiful island". He was notably satisfied that he had given testimony of his political and religious creed. "Yeah", said Mac, "yeah", while he stood up, "now, see if you can find a macamba to clean the other shoe..." Exit Mac.

While Mac left it was still quiet. Even more so. Antilleans are very polite and it is not proper to laugh when somebody has been had.

The Dutchman looked around with a pained expression on his face to see if we were aware of his suffering. It was still quiet when somebody started to whistle while leaving the place. Then the Dutchman found the solution to save his face. With a beatific smile he now said loudly to nobody in particular: "Mac likes a joke..." Nobody commented and the lack of any reaction which might have helped the man, became embarrassing.

In the corner sat this big fellow who sells "numbers", the illegal lottery which is the popular pastime. He likes to come to San Marco to sell tickets and he drinks one coffee and pays an excessive tip to show his standing in the numbers racket.

He brusquely stood up and grabbed his buttocks with both hands: "They got me", he shouted, "they got me..." And with long strides, as if still hurting in his back, he left the place. That was really funny and we all laughed. We laughed till tears rolled down our cheeks. Robert S. laughed until he fell down from his chair. We laughed even more when we saw that the Dutchman was also laughing. I bought him a cup of coffee and now we could also laugh about "crazy Mac".

After all, everybody loves a joke! ■

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# Marianne's charms not exclusive

by Han Folkertsma



The idea that wine is bound exclusively to "La douce France" is a misconception as persistent as it is nationalistic. Kept alive for that matter with great dexterity by the French wine farmers themselves, supported in this by the different organisations involved in the sale and promotion of French wines.

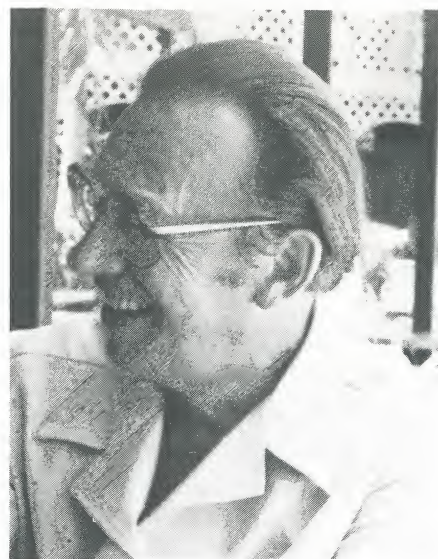
However, too many people are still unaware of the fact that the Italians pride themselves on having the largest wine production in the world, that the Swiss know how to make delightful wines and that the Austrian grape nectar is striving to conquer the connoisseur's preference, while the Californian wine farmers have succeeded in wresting excellent products from their valleys with the help of technical ingenuity. As a consequence people tend to stick to the French labels, partly out of snobbism, partly because they have never tasted the alternatives.

## Climate

For the Antilles this is not altogether true; there are surprisingly many Californians to be discovered on the tables and in the cellars, while the Spanish wines are also more abundantly represented than in Europe. Perhaps because the climates in the three countries have more in common with each other these wines "go down" better than in Europe.

But there is also another side to the climate story. In the Antilles wine is often stored at too high a temperature and as a result matures too quickly. Through this and if it is also poured too warm, it will lose part of its charm even before the tongue and palate have had a chance to taste it.

Moreover in the Antilles — not counting a few good exceptions — there is a lack of a certain amount of "wine culture", that is a basic knowledge about the grape races, the proper combinations and the optimal possibilities to give a good wine what it deserves. A very amiable restaurant owner with an extraordinarily fine kitchen the other day offered me from his own stock a bottle of Hautes Sautes (d'Yquem!), because finally and for the first time he saw the opportunity to open this precious bottle with a connoisseur. And to think that one can only learn to know wine by drinking it often,



but never by having too much of it at one time . . . . .

## Rivals

The fact that Californians make such excellent wines, with a special emphasis on the Napa Valley, is due to a high degree of technical skill. For it is not easy to rival the French in a climate so dry and hot. The French after all are blessed by nature with temperate weather, variety in soil and a generations-old tradition. That the Californians have nevertheless succeeded in doing so appears from the fact that many Frenchmen nowadays travel to Napa Valley to learn the tricks of the trade in a wine region that has managed to become one of the first-rate on this earth. Where comparative tastings — far too often in Marianne's opinion — have led to an almost painful victory for the California wines!

As a result of climate control with the help of kerosine-stoves in the vineyards in combination with the use of windmills and irrigation systems to fend off too much dryness, but especially through well-planned vinification, the people of Napa Valley and to a lesser degree also of the region south of St. Francisco have succeeded in making top qualities. These are ►

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### French wines and their characteristics:

- **1980** — Too cold, too wet a summer. Late harvest; here and there in the Medoc a reasonably good wine was produced. Moderate volume everywhere. It was very bad in the Elzas, reasonable to good in the Bourgogne, thus indifferent in the Bordeaux and the Loire. As is always the case with wine: in bad years a few excellent toppers, depending on the time of harvest and the maker.
- **1979** — Average year, not "high". Red Bordeaux may mature from five to ten years, the white one is very "flat". Bourgogne was reasonable to good and the Rhone wines too were rather favourable. The Loire and Elzas did not do so well.
- **1978** — Splendid red Bordeaux, which can be stored for a very long time. Bourgognes also nice. The topper of this year: the Rhone, which produced great storage wines (10 to 15 years at least). The Loire was very reasonable and so was the Elzas.
- **1977** — Bad year for the red Bordeaux and even very bad for the Bourgogne. The Rhones also do not represent much, which in fact is also the case with the Loire and Elzas, although there a bit more could be achieved.
- **1976** — First rate year for the red Bordeaux, bad for the white one. The Bourgognes were even better and therefore have a good chance to become good storage wines. Also the white Bourgogne of this year is excellent. The Rhones have also succeeded, the Elzasers are even outstanding. The Loire of 1976 is now magnificent to drink.
- **1975** — The year of years for the Bordeaux, especially in red. The red Bourgogne on the other hand was not much, whereas the white one was again fine and is still developing. The remaining regions this year produced a good wine without many pretentions. The champagne, just like 1976 became a millenium.
- **1974** — Moderate year for the red Bordeaux (the sweet white one did not do well at all), moderate wines also in the rest of France with Elzas as an exception.
- **1973** — Reasonable year, nice time to drink the red Bordeaux and the red Bourgogne. Rhone also barely good, but not more than that. The Elzas again drew attention with excellent wines, which are now ready to be toasted with.
- **1972** — Bad year for the red Bordeaux, don't put it up longer than about two years. The red Bourgognes did a lot better this year, the white ones on the other hand just missed the boat. Strangely enough the Rhone had an excellent year and the Loire and Elzas gave little reason for enthusiasm.
- **1971** — Decidedly fine year for the red Bordeaux, white became a flop. He who is able to lay hands on a Sauternes of this year has a jewel. The red Bourgognes are reasonable to good and in the southern part of the Rhone valley even excellent wines were made. The Elzas had a top year: especially the Rieslings of this year are delightful.
- **1970** — Also an excellent red Bordeaux year. The sweet white one also a price-winner. Bourgogne moderate, Rhone very good and Elzas so so la la.

usually produced by the smaller vineyards. The big boys of the region also make excellent wines, but they lack the refined touch of the small, nearby craftsmanlike "châteaux". He who has ever tasted a "Château Maurice" (you do indeed smell the French origin) will blindly take it for a cru from Bordeaux.

### Counter balance

It's really a pity that the revenues of especially these small enterprises are too small to enable them to reach out farther than the restaurants in their own country. However, as the wish to export for purely economic reasons is clearly diminishing on the part of both the Government and the wine farmers, outstanding California wines are more and more going to appear on "foreign" tables. Fortunately so, for it will form a counter balance for the French supremacy and help maintain French quality consciousness on the level it should be: as high as possible.

There is no need, however, to exaggerate for in the really fine ▶

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years there is nothing to equal a wellmade, balanced “vin français”. In such a year the Californian, which will always remain somewhat flatter, is not able to touch them and the advantages for the French wine country will be doubled.

But in the bad years like 1980, which has turned out to be a decidedly bad year for several French regions, there is fortunately a lot that is good to be discovered outside France. ■

BOOKS



photo R. Snow

Aeroplane is the title of a just published textbook for private pilot training. The author, energetic ALM-pilot **Albert Pijl**, hopes to publish several more volumes covering the total spectrum of private flying for the purpose of promoting self-study. The first volume which is now for sale (Naf. 27,—) contains 102 pages with instructions and 119 graphics, which should enable students to prepare themselves adequately for their private pilot examination. As all other Dutch textbooks are out of date, mr. Pijl (33) has rendered a service not only to private flying in the Antilles but also in the Netherlands. (see also Bibliography). ■



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*C. Goslinga:*

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Curaçao, 1981.



Boletin de Estudios Latino-Americanos y del Caribe, nr. 29, dec. 1980.

In this issue:

A review by *Th. M. P. Oltheten* of a thesis (phD) by *Willem Koot* on emigration in the Neth. Antilles. A sociological research into the extent of and motives leading to emigration in particular on Aruba and Curaçao.

Also in this issue: a review by *H. J. Duller* of a thesis (PhD) by *A. J. Butter*: What is meant by independence.

Published by Cedla, Amsterdam, Holland. Nf. 10,-.



*A. Pijl:* *Vliegtuig.*

A textbook of private pilot training.

Printed by the Curaçaosche Courant N.V., Curaçao. Naf. 27,-.



*J. Tacoma:*

Kunstmatige schedel deformatie in Aruba en 'a pre-Caribbean skeleton from Bonaire'

Studies on the physical anthropology of the Netherlands Antilles, nr. 105 in the series of the natural science study-club on Surinam and the Neth. Antilles and nr. 2 in the series on natural history.

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A glossary and list of expressions.



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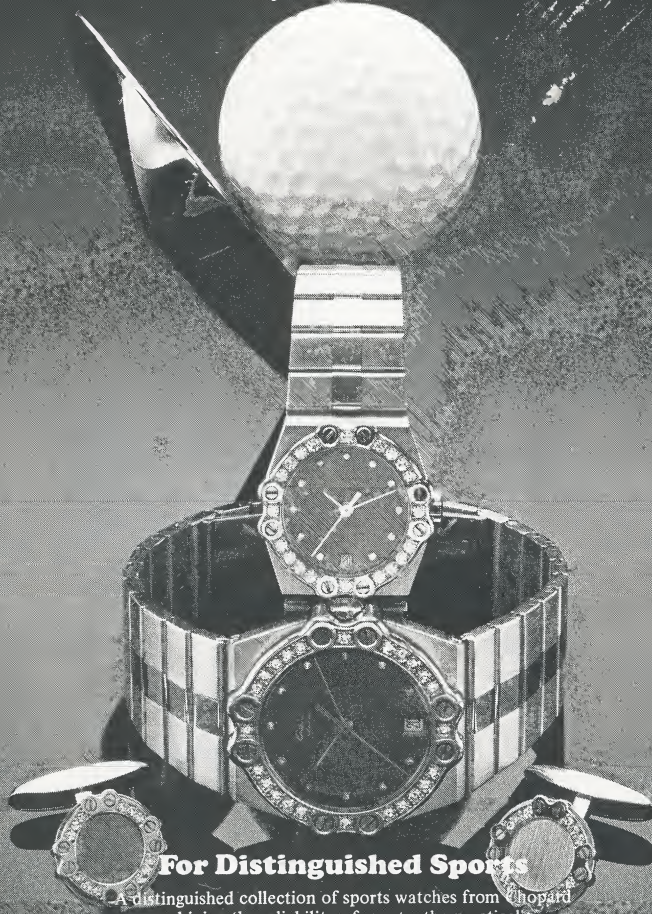


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